THE DYNASTY ISSUE! *with* **HARRY & MEGHAN** MICHELLE YEOH **FRANK SINATRA** AND MORE!

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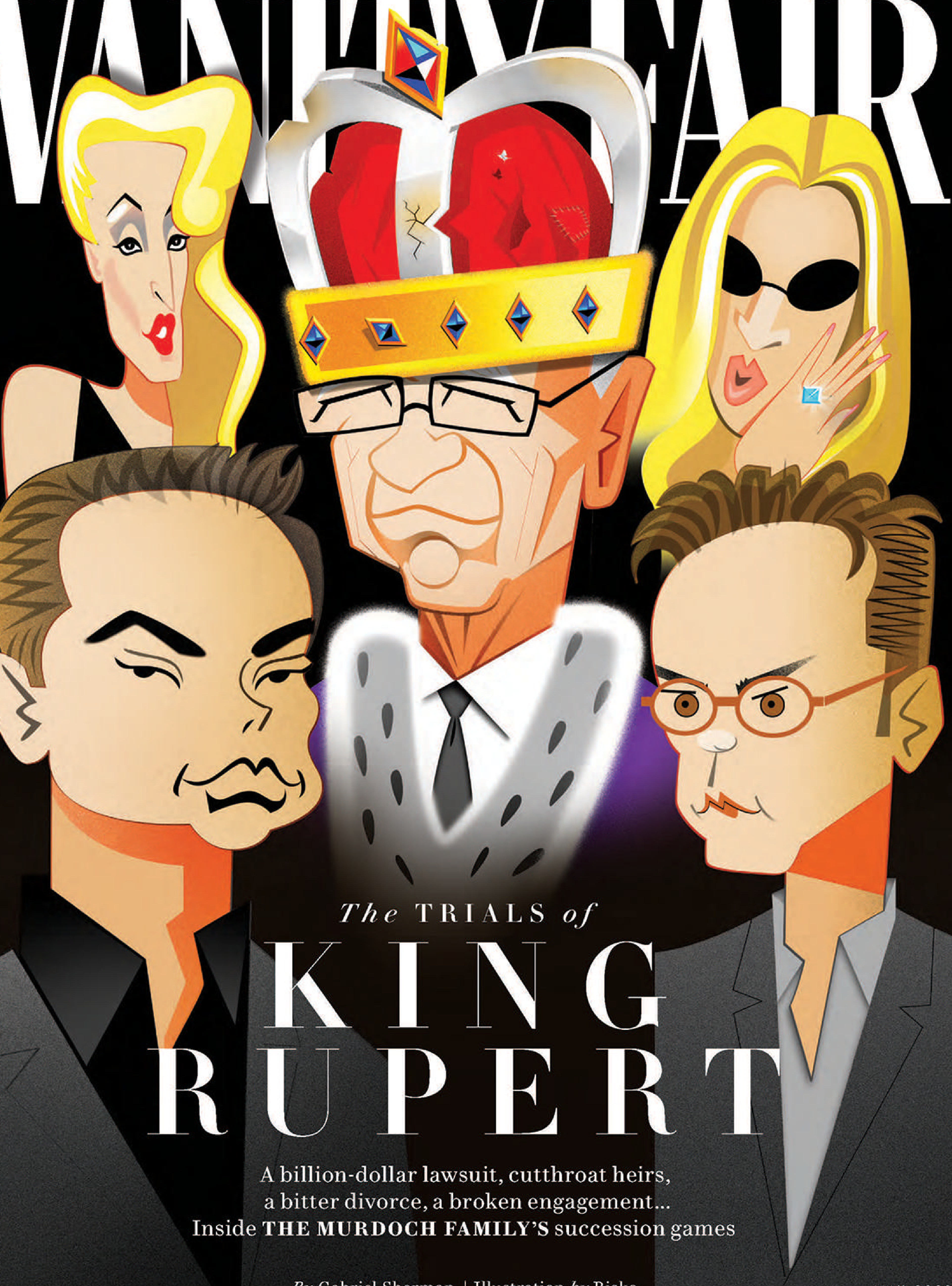

The TRIALS *of* KING RUPERT

A billion-dollar lawsuit, cutthroat heirs, a bitter divorce, a broken engagement… Inside **THE MURDOCH FAMILY'S** succession games

By Gabriel Sherman | Illustration *by* Risko

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Media tycoon **Rupert Murdoch,** surrounded by (clockwise from top left) his fourth wife, **Jerry Hall,** ex-fiancée **Ann Lesley Smith,** and sons **James** and **Lachlan Murdoch.** Illustration by Risko.

PHOTOGRAPH BY MARK SELIGER

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KARWAI TANG/GETTY IMAGES.

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"Harry and Meghan have shifted their media approach.... The rest of the royals still seem to be relying on a playbook from another century."

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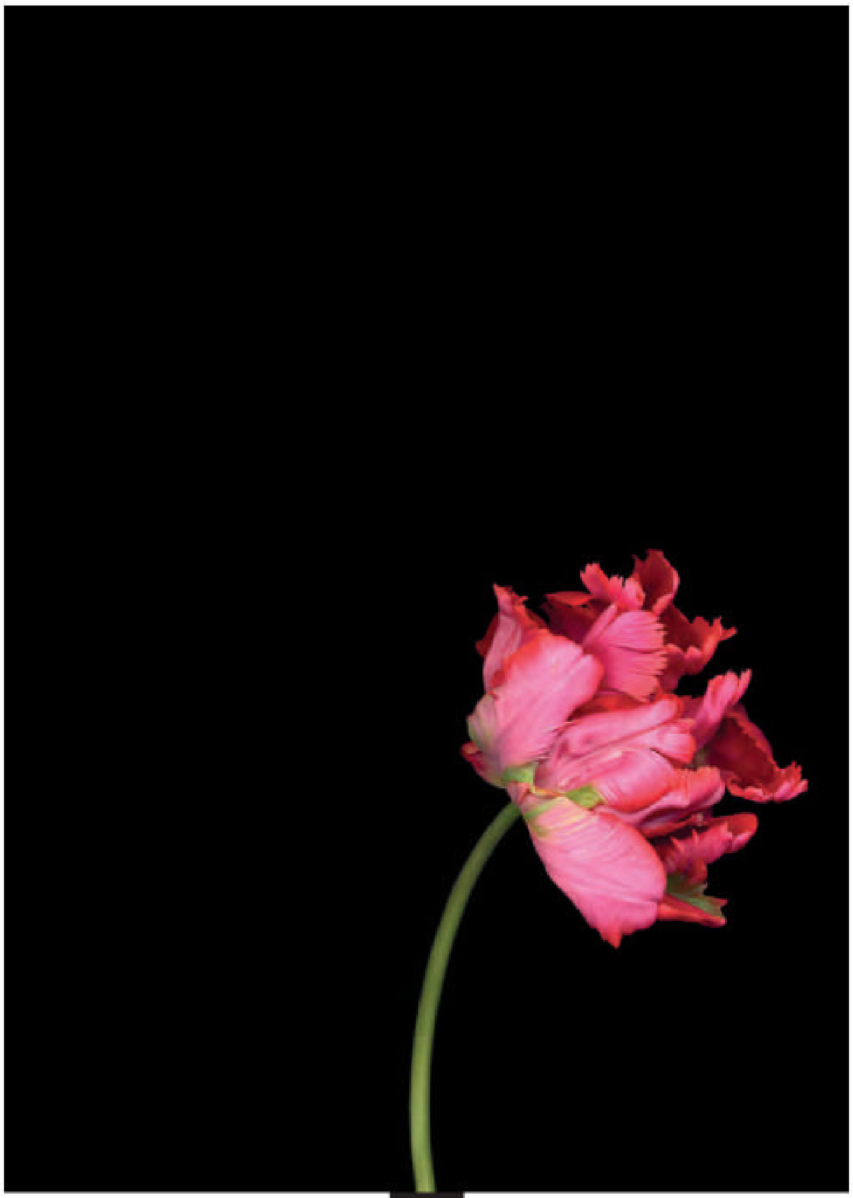

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The Hot LIST

Out with the cold, in with the new: behold sun-drenched escapes, glittering arrivals, and launches to lift the spirits

■ *Finer Things*

WING IT: Tiffany & Co. has unveiled Bird on a Pearl, an exclusive high jewellery capsule collection made with the world's rarest pearls (**8**). *tiffany.com*

WRIST ASSESSMENT: Cartier's Clash [Un] limited watch (**1**) is characterised by an elegant mechanism that stands out for its beauty, with beads, picot studs and clou carrés. *cartier.com*

■ *On Beauty*

GOOD TO GLOW: Infused with cherry oil, the Dior Addict Lip Glow (**5**) softens and nourishes lips while bringing out their natural colour with a gorgeous, gleaming finish. *dior.com*

DAY MAKER: The ultimate in active daytime skincare, Decorté's AQ Meliority Intensive Regenerating Day Cream (**3**) increases the antioxidant capacity of the skin and strengthens its protective barrier. *decortecosmetics.co.uk*

■ *Style File*

OVER THE MOON: The new Prada Moon bag (**7**) has plenty of Y2K appeal, revisiting a noughties classic in fresh nappa leather. *prada.com*

UNDER THE SUN: The opening of the Veuve Clicquot Solaire Culture exhibition (**4**) celebrates 250 years of the iconic Champagne house, alongside the return of the Sunny Side Up Café. *Until June 6. veuveclicquot.com*

FLOWER POWER: Designer florist Philip Hammond and executive pastry chef Michael Kwan are behind The Dorchester's newest joy-sparking offering, Cake & Flowers (**2**). *dorchestercollection.com*

A TOUCH OF FROST: CÎROC Snap Frost (**6**) is derived from fine French grapes, which are distilled five times to give the smoothest, most delicious taste. *amazon.co.uk*

■ *Jet Set*

PARADISE FOUND: Live out those wildest tropical island fantasies at Ozen Reserve Bolifushi (**9**), the uber-luxe private island resort located in a pristine lagoon in the Maldives' South Malé Atoll. *ozenreserve-bolifushi.com*

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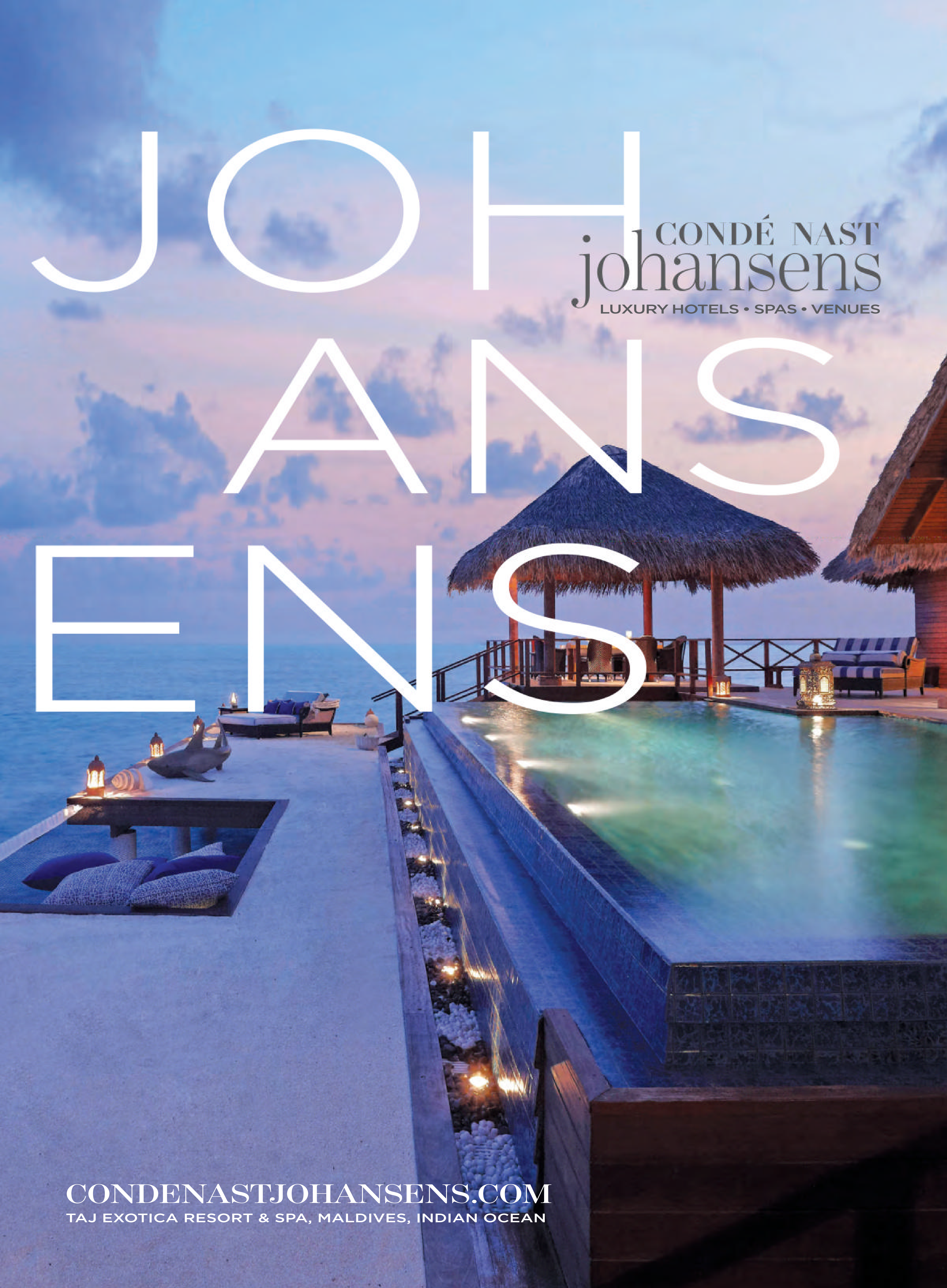

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Radhika Jones, photographed by Mark Seliger at the 2023 *Vanity Fair* Oscar Party.

Gown by **Oscar de la Renta;** sandals by **Manolo Blahnik;** earrings by **Van Cleef & Arpels.**

For the past five years, we have devoted our May issue to dynasties—monarchical, political, and metaphorical. This spring, with the coronation of King Charles in Great Britain; the Dominion lawsuit looming over media mogul Rupert Murdoch and Fox News, his crown jewel; and the final season of *Succession* in full swing, we are as obsessed as ever with the outsize role powerful families play in our culture.

The last time London staged a coronation, the cutting-edge broadcast technology was television. This time around, as Erin Vanderhoof reports, the British royals contend with a media landscape that is far less monolithic, a cacophony of social platforms and tabloid sites. Whether the rite of passage that will officially make Charles Britain's king can cut through the noise depends largely on the family's ability to evolve their own strategies of dealing with the press.

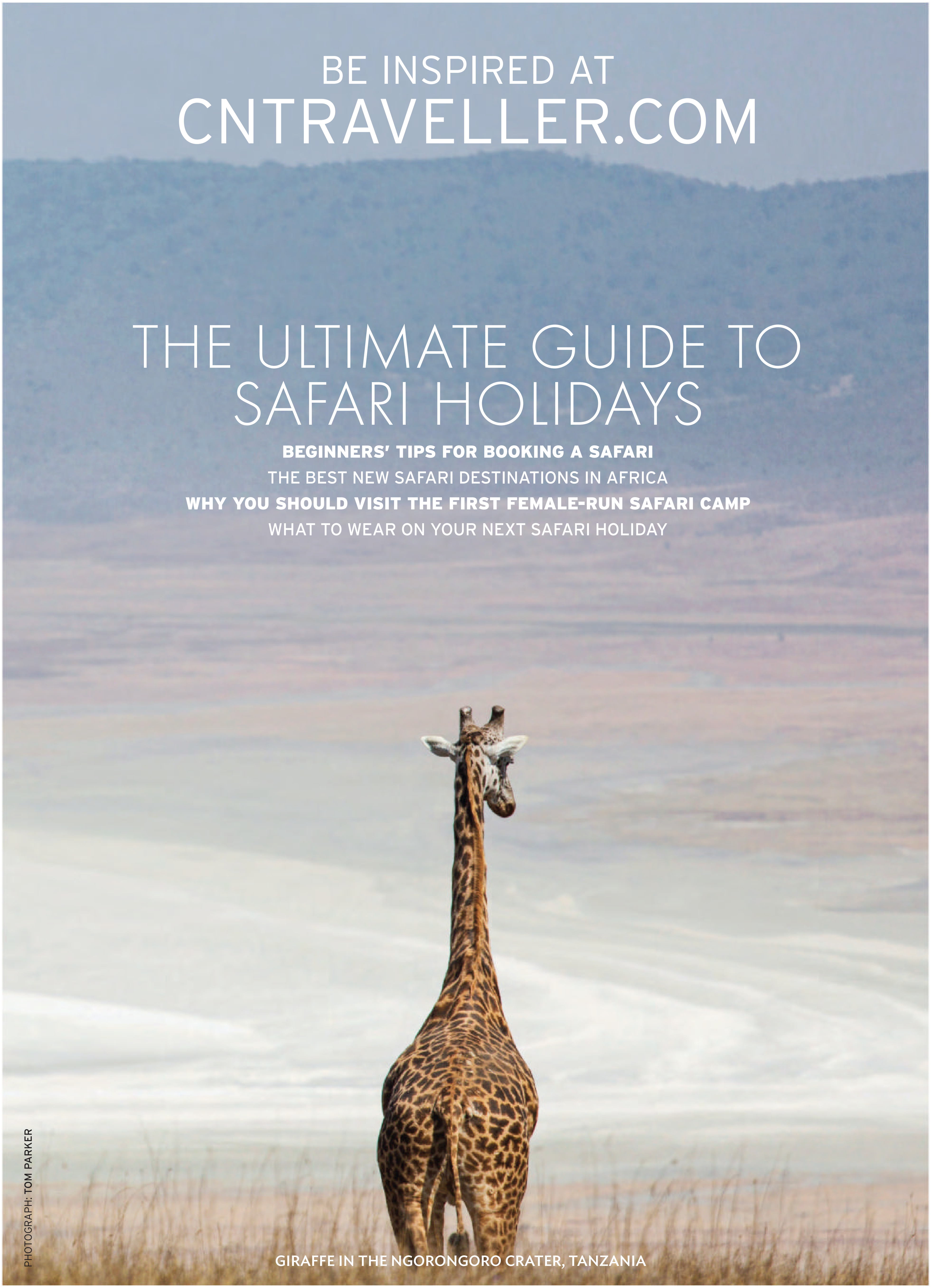
And on that subject, Gabriel Sherman, who has reported on Fox and the Murdochs for more than a decade, digs deep into the ties that bind and the lines that divide the 92-year-old titan, his six children, and his four ex-wives to game out the future of their media empire. The drama may get deliciously petty, but the arc is Shakespearean and the stakes are sky-high, for us arguably as much as for them.

If you prefer your tyrannical patriarchs and squabbling siblings fictional, tune in to the new season of *Still Watching,* our TV podcast, in which *VF* chief critic Richard Lawson and staff writer Chris Murphy dissect each episode of the new season of *Succession,* with special guests from the cast and crew. Meanwhile, this spring, Vanity Fair Studios and Scout Productions present *The Secrets of Hillsong,* a four-part documentary series premiering on FX May 19 based on the magazine's original reporting on the rise and fall of Pastor Carl Lentz of the famed Hillsong Church, its history of harboring abuse, and the dark family saga behind the church's founding.

SINCE 2014, *VF* contributing photographer Mark Seliger has created a warm and welcoming studio space at the *Vanity Fair* Oscar Party, where the evening's triumphant stars come to pose with their little gold men, and other decked-out guests sit for pictures to commemorate the occasion. The portraits that emerge feel timeless; in fact, they are accomplished in less than five minutes on average, a feat all the more remarkable given that Mark shoots for about nine hours straight amid the buzz of Hollywood's biggest night out.

I was struck, watching this year's Academy Awards ceremony, by the moving speeches from so many first-time winners, from Michelle Yeoh to Brendan Fraser to Ke Huy Quan—each acceptance a reminder that though awards aren't synonymous with value, they can be richly deserved symbols of recognition and accomplishment. The mood at this year's party was jubilant, the spirit of victory infectious. And Mark's portraits, as ever, provide a beautiful, intimate window into the night.

RADHIKA JONES, *Editor in Chief*



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GIRAFFE IN THE NGORONGORO CRATER, TANZANIA

PHOTOGRAPH: TOM PARKER

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Clockwise from top left: Michaela Dosamantes, Erin Vanderhoof, Nick Riley Bentham, Emily Jane Fox, Gabriel Sherman.

Gabriel SHERMAN

"THE KING'S DOMINION" P. 58

VF's Gabriel Sherman is the author of the best-selling biography *The Loudest Voice in the Room: How the Brilliant, Bombastic Roger Ailes Built Fox News—and Divided a Country,* which was adapted into a Golden Globe–winning TV series. A fan of *Succession,* he loves writing about its real-life inspirations. But, Sherman says, "as someone close to the Murdochs said, the truth is so much more complicated."

Michaela DOSAMANTES

"BE HERE NOW" P. 20

Dosamantes is a bicoastal stylist and fine jewelry enthusiast, and she is the editor-at-large at the Stax Jewelry Collective. While styling the Academy Award–nominated *Everything Everywhere All at Once* actor Stephanie Hsu, the two enjoyed experimenting with shrunken and oversized proportions.

Emily Jane FOX

"PLAYING FOR KEEPS" P. 74

"I have been a national correspondent for *VF* through the rise and (maybe?) fall of Trump and the many characters who've swelled and shrank in this era," says Fox. "Writing about Candace Owens's growing influence and platform felt like peering through a looking glass down the new, extremely online conservative rabbit hole from the perspective of its leader."

Erin VANDERHOOF

"ALL THE ANGLES" P. 68

Psychoanalysis of the royals has been at the center of Vanderhoof's reporting for *VF* for years, but "Prince Harry's memoir provided me with more material than I ever thought I would have," she says. "His frustration made me curious about the history of the phrase 'Never complain, never explain,' and led me to talk with strategists and theorists about different ways of handling the media in the 21st century."

Nick Riley BENTHAM

"BE HERE NOW" P. 20

"Stephanie Hsu's energy is fantastic," says British photographer, director, and writer Bentham, who captured the Oscar-nominated actor for this month's Vanities profile. Bentham's joyful spirit on set marked a playful day, culminating in beautiful imagery indicative of his quintessential energetic and spontaneous style.

SHERMAN: JENNIFER STAHL. DOSAMANTES: DARCY HEMLEY. FOX: JILLIAN MITCHELL. VANDERHOOF: JESSICA XIE. BENTHAM: COURTESY OF NICK RILEY BENTHAM.

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A SINATRA HAUNT HITS REFRESH

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All at once, **STEPHANIE HSU** *is everywhere*

Dress by **Louis Vuitton;** tights by **Wolford;** bangles by **Lizzie Fortunato** (center), **Tiffany & Co.** (left), and **Tiffany & Co. Elsa Peretti.** Throughout: hair products by **Shu Uemura Art of Hair** and **Hidden Crown;** makeup products by **Dior;** nail enamel by **Chanel Le Vernis.** Styled by Michaela Dosamantes.

HAIR, BRIAN FISHER; MAKEUP, LISA STOREY; MANICURE, EMI KUDO. PRODUCED ON LOCATION BY PREISS CREATIVE. FOR DETAILS GO TO VF.COM/CREDITS.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY NICK RILEY BENTHAM

Jacket and belt by **Chanel;** headband by **Jennifer Behr;** earrings by **Emily P. Wheeler;** ring by **David Webb.**

Be HERE NOW

Even after roaming across the multiverse, STEPHANIE HSU is taking a joyride

"I want to get a light phone," says Stephanie Hsu. "It's a phone that has no apps on it. I covet that simplicity." Makes sense, given Hsu has been everything, everywhere all at once for months now: promoting her Oscar-nominated turn in A24's best picture winner; filming her first action role in *The Fall Guy* opposite Ryan Gosling and Emily Blunt; making a cameo in Rian Johnson's *Poker Face;* and launching her R-rated summer comedy *Joy Ride* at SXSW. "I haven't figured out a way to make the last year less intense."

BORN IN Southern California, Hsu found acting through photosynthesis: She made a video on the topic for a school science class. **AT TISCH,** Hsu's mentor and professor Liz Swados introduced her to the downtown New York theater world. "She taught us that wherever the line is drawn, you hop over it and set up camp over there and throw a party."

WHEN SHE WON an Indie Spirit Award for *Everything Everywhere,* "I had taken my shoes off, and [presenter] Jeremy Pope helped me get back into my Louboutins. I'm proud of being barefoot on that stage." **HER COSTAR** Jamie Lee Curtis gave Hsu a lesson on handling her newfound attention. During one fan encounter, "she was so proud and so unfazed by her success but not hiding from it. An easy way to stay humble is to kind of shoot yourself down, but she rose to that moment with such grace." **SHE'S STILL NOT OVER** performing with David Byrne at the Oscars. "I was rushed backstage—five flights of stairs, no elevators. It was giving Broadway quick change." **SHE LOVES HOW** *Joy Ride* subverts stereotypes by exploding them. Hsu and her all-Asian creative team "can make fun of ourselves and be unapologetic. I love that I'm going from an Oscar-nominated film to a balls-to-the-walls comedy." **BUT DON'T ASK** her to bulk up her social media presence. "I mean, I can't even fucking turn on TikTok. It's just too much." **WHAT'S NEXT?** "I didn't get into this industry to be famous, or to just be a box office star. That's just not my goal. I want to invest in stories that I really believe in, so I'm making things happen from the ground up."

—BRITT HENNEMUTH

Road Trip

John Leguizamo shares some of his favorite discoveries from MSNBC and NBC News Studios' *Leguizamo Does America*, an exploration of the country's Latino communities, airing now.

LITTLE VILLAGE

Chicago

Leguizamo "had a blast" exploring actor Michael Peña's hometown neighborhood. "Seeing a local boy come back to his old stomping ground gave me secondhand nostalgia. We hit up Taquerias Atotonilco and had barbecue with his family like he used to back in the day."

GALA HISPANIC THEATRE

Washington, DC

Hugo and Rebecca Read Medrano founded the theater almost 50 years ago. Along with hosting professional performances, they run a bilingual youth education program. "A lot of these kids share the same struggles, like getting bullied, and here they find a community where they can shine."

LA TROPIKITCHEN

New York

Prompted by the pandemic, "Stephanie Bonnin [below] opened a restaurant in her apartment, cooking in her kitchen and using fresh greens grown on her deck," says Leguizamo. "She made the most delicious Colombian food I've ever had."

LEGUIZAMO: GUIDO VENITUCCI. LEGUIZAMO AND BONNIN: MSNBC FILMS/NBC NEWS STUDIOS. FOR DETAILS, GO TO VF.COM/CREDITS.

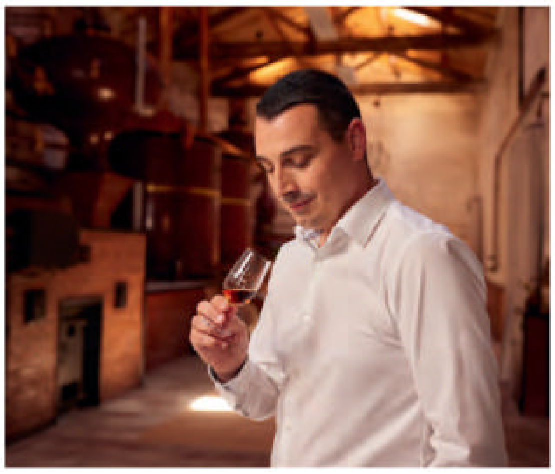
Louis XIII Rare Cask 42.1 housed in Baccarat black crystal, with mirror spear and engraved Pillet glasses.

LIQUID *Asset*

A decade since the last edition was released, Louis XIII is proud to introduce Rare Cask 42.1, drawn from a single tierçon in a limited edition of only 775 Baccarat black crystal decanters

IN A WORLD of mass production and instant gratification, it's unusual to come across something that feels genuinely exclusive—the product of time and, of course, talent, craftsmanship and mastery. An exquisite exception is Louis XIII Rare Cask 42.1, the third edition of the famous collection, appearing 10 years after the last release.

Rare Cask 42.1 is a Grande Champagne Cognac, drawn from one single tierçon from the Louis XIII cellars at the family estate of Le Domaine du Grollet, located in the superior growing cru of the Cognac region. From this single cask in the family cellar, Cellar Master Baptiste Loiseau uncovered an exceptional and unique aromatic profile, with an unexpected strength of 42.1 per cent (compared to the usual 40 per cent).



Such **RARE, PRECIOUS** liquid is deserving of a distinctive vessel.

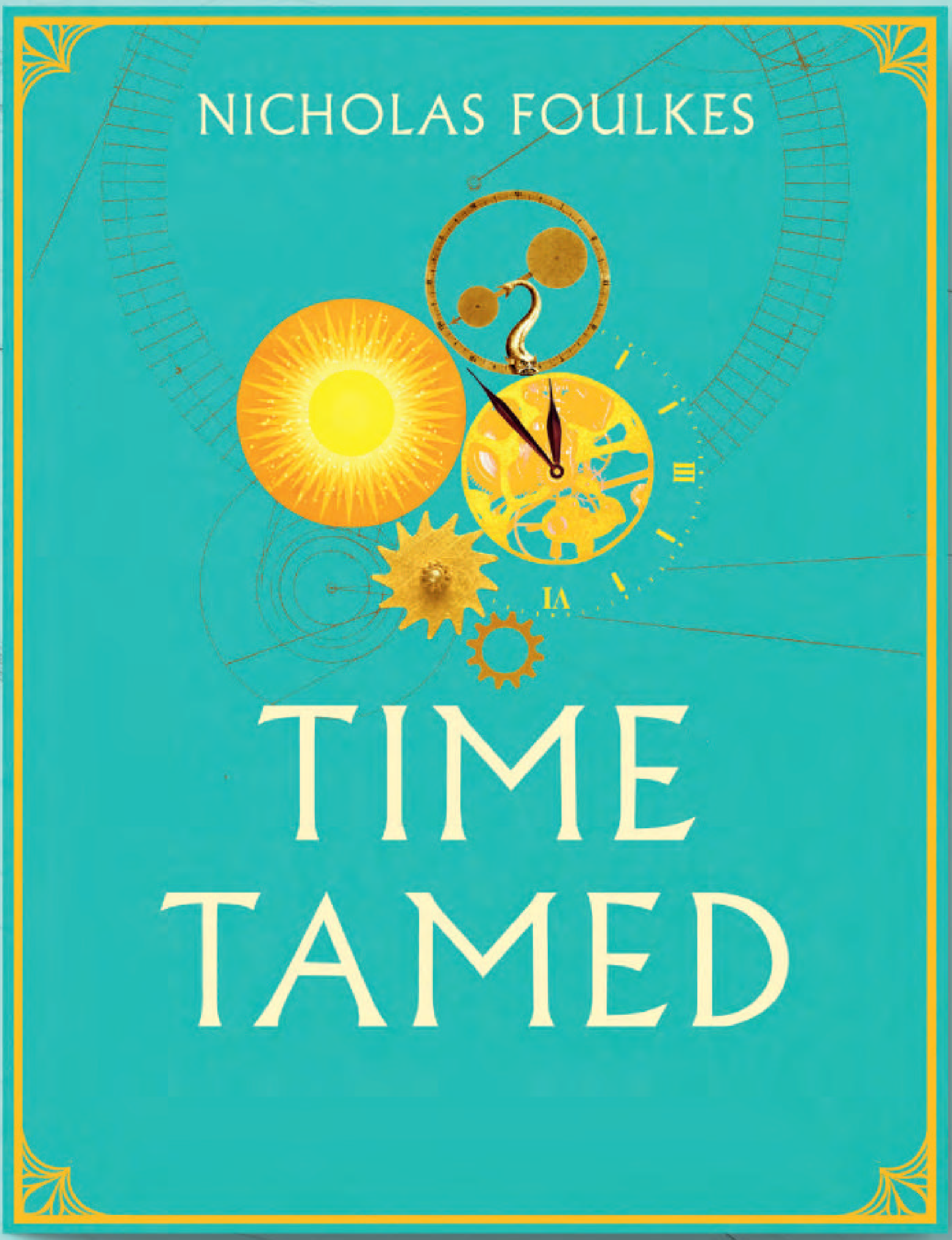
Such rare, precious liquid is deserving of an equally distinctive vessel. Rare Cask 42.1 is housed in a black crystal decanter, crafted with the unique savoir-faire of Baccarat. Each decanter is numbered and equipped with NFC technology, which allows the lucky owner to connect to the Louis XIII Society. Engraved Pillet crystal glasses and a serving pipette complete the collection, providing the tools to add a fitting sense of ritual, while a coffret made from Limousin oak from the Cognac region envelops all.

Only 775 of these ultra-limited edition decanters are available, along with the chance to sample it by the glass in select locations (including The Dorchester's Vesper Bar) from June 1. It was unveiled at an exclusive global launch event in Venice, where *V.F.*'s Charlotte Taylor found that: "The clink of 100 engraved Pillet crystal glasses echoing across the canal befitted this exceptionally rare creation."

An extremely limited number will be available at the Louis XIII Boutique in Harrods from June 20; you can join the waiting list by registering your interest at *conciergerie.uk@louisxiii-cognac.com*

For more information, please visit uk.louisxiii-cognac.com

Discover the remarkable story of humanity’s quest to measure time


NICHOLAS FOULKES
TIME TAMED

‘Indispensable reading’
Daily Telegraph

‘Beautifully illustrated’
Daily Mail

Available from Waterstones.com

Room to GROW

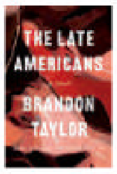
A decade after launching her cult favorite brand—and three years into a project pushing equity in fashion—AURORA JAMES takes stock

"I STILL HAVE so much work to do," says Aurora James. But the Toronto-born, New York–based 38-year-old is already doing a lot. The creative director and founder of the brand Brother Vellies, beloved for its artisanal accessories that maintain African design practices—Zendaya and Beyoncé have both walked red carpets in the brand's footwear—is the one who came up with the Fifteen Percent Pledge, a nonprofit dedicated in part to encouraging retailers to stock Black-owned brands. She was responsible for Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez's "Tax the Rich" dress at the 2021 Met Gala. And this month, with the release of her memoir, she adds author to her list of credentials. *Wildflower* (Random House) details a tumultuous upbringing—after relocating to Jamaica as a child, she watched her mother, James's earliest fashion inspiration, suffer domestic abuse—and the eventual solace she found in creativity. James hopes the book illustrates how she's worked within a constricted system. "This is the country we are in. This is the game that we are playing," she says. "It does not mean that we can't rewrite some of those rules. It does not mean that we cannot get across this mountain together." That togetherness is paramount. "We are not on our own. We're also on the wings of our ancestors."

After book demands recede, James plans to expand Brother Vellies, which already sells at Nordstrom and Bloomingdale's, along with its flagship store in Brooklyn—she'd like it to become a household name. She also hopes that her best-known project will become obsolete. "I think the pledge needs to work itself out of relevancy," she says. "We need to get to a place where 15 percent is just a given. We are not there yet."

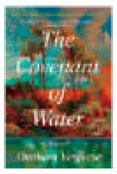
—KIA D. GOOSBY

SIX-PACK Manuscripts lost, found, and stolen—and more new fiction



THE LATE AMERICANS

Brandon Taylor's finely rendered sophomore novel excavates relationships, from lust to soured love, among a group of Iowa City grad students (writers, dancers, and more) and town residents. **(Jonathan Cape)**



THE COVENANT OF WATER

In Kerala, South India, a surviving daughter (and neurosurgeon) seeks the cause of her family's multigenerational drowning curse in Abraham Verghese's surreal and sweeping epic. **(Grove Press UK)**

YELLOWFACE
R. F. KUANG

YELLOWFACE

In this publishing world send-up from bestseller R.F. Kuang, a Chinese American literary sensation dies and a middling white contemporary steals her unpublished manuscript—part ghost story, part farce. **(The Borough Press)**

THE GUEST
EMMA CLINE

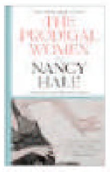
THE GUEST

Emma Cline serves glitz and unease: Following a romantic tryst gone awry, a 22-year-old charms her way into the Hamptons houses of unwitting strangers, leaving destruction in her wake. **(Chatto & Windus)**

MARCEL PROUST

THE SEVENTY-FIVE FOLIOS & OTHER UNPUBLISHED MANUSCRIPTS

Marcel Proust's recently discovered early manuscripts for his classic magnum opus now appear in English, edited by Nathalie Mauriac Dyer and translated by Sam Taylor. **(The Belknap Press)**



THE PRODIGAL WOMEN

First published in 1942, former *VF* contributor Nancy Hale's intimate and incisive novel of three 20th-century women coming of age is back in print. **(Library of America)** —*Keziah Weir*

Feeling Tender

New works of nonfiction plumb intimacy of all kinds.

TAKING CARE
by Sarah DiGregorio

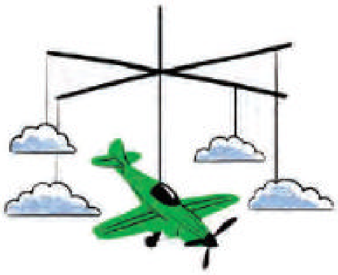
This probing history of nurses **(Harper)** situates the profession as radical, necessary health care—but plagued, too, by structural inequities from sexism to racism.

A LIVING REMEDY
by Nicole Chung

Having lost her parents to varied failures of the American health care system, Chung has situated a portrait of grief, rage, and love against a backdrop of a middle class in flux. **(Ecco)**

LESBIAN LOVE STORY
by Amelia Possanza

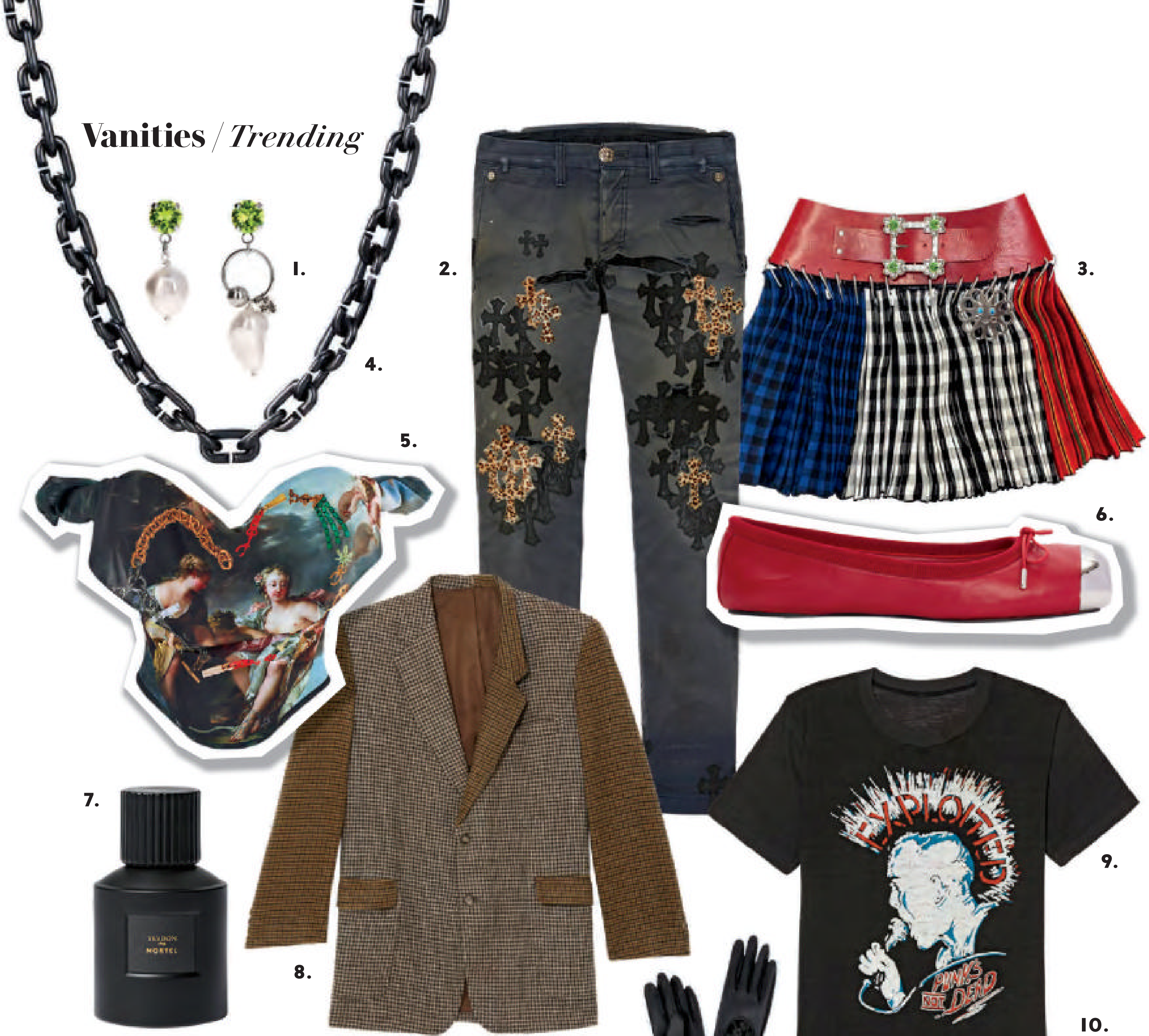
In this warmhearted and sexy memoir **(Square Peg)**, Possanza combs through Bushwick bars and Hadrian's library for stories of queer love.



IRMA
by Terry McDonell

McDonell's father died young, a pilot killed during WW II. As he raises his own sons, he reflects on his mother's relentless optimism and strength. **(Blackstone)** —*K.W.*

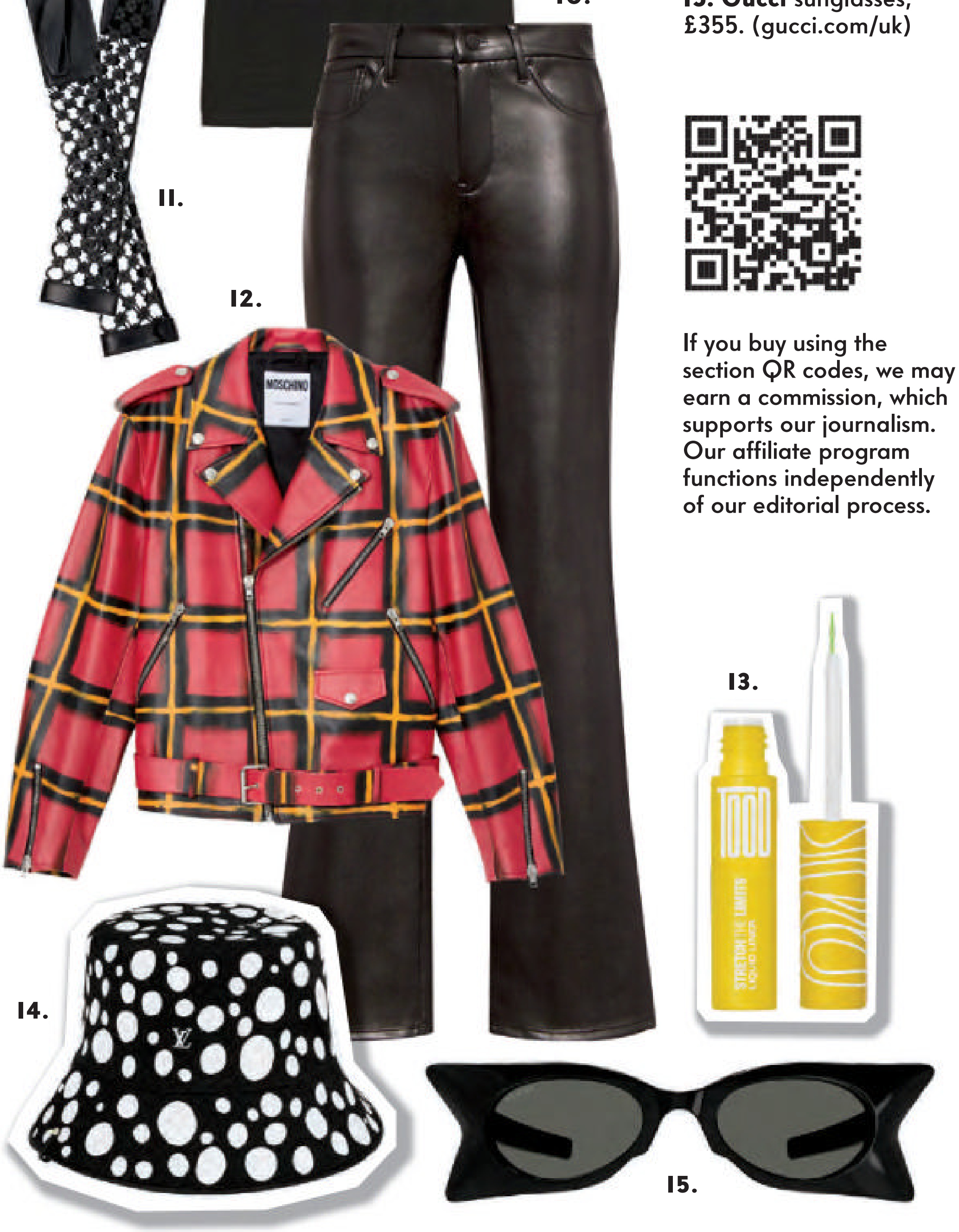
JAMES: SEBASTIAN KIM. NOVELS: COURTESY OF THE PUBLISHERS. ILLUSTRATIONS: CHLOE CUSHMAN.



Material GIRL

For those desperately seeking fashion inspiration in a transitional season, there's Madge, ever evolving. This spring's best looks embody her early era: chain-link necklaces, devil-may-care leather, and embellished denim. Get into the groove!

Madonna as the titular Susan in the 1985 comedy-drama *Desperately Seeking Susan.* Her 12th concert tour kicks off in Vancouver this summer.



EXPRESS YOURSELF

1. Justine Clenquet clip-on earrings, £55. (Browns) **2. Chrome Hearts** pants; similar styles, £3,810. (0 203 787 4363) **3. Chopova Lowena** skirt, £1,064. (chopovalowena.com) **4. David Yurman** necklace, £1,650. (davidyurman.com/eu/en-gb) **5. Vivienne Westwood** corset, £1,090. (viviennewestwood.com/en) **6. Alexander McQueen** shoes. (available in the U.S. at saksfifthavenue.com) **7. Trudon** Mortel Noire eau de parfum, £220. (trudon.co.uk) **8. ERL** jacket, price upon request. (london.doverstreetmarket.com) **9. Saint Luis** T-shirt. (available in the U.S. at saintluis.com) **10. NYDJ** pants, £110. (nydj.com) **11. Dior** gloves, £1,950. (Dior boutiques) **12. Moschino** jacket, £3,577. (moschino.com/gb_en) **13. TooD Beauty** Stretch the Limits liquid liner in Lime, £11. (toodbeauty.com) **14. Louis Vuitton x Yayoi Kusama** hat, £620. (uk.louisvuitton.com) **15. Gucci** sunglasses, £355. (gucci.com/uk)

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DESPERATELY SEEKING SUSAN: EVERETT COLLECTION. CHROME HEARTS, ERL, MOSCHINO, SAINT LAURENT: JOSEPHINE SCHIELE; STYLING, KRIS JENSEN. ALL OTHERS: COURTESY OF THE BRANDS.

Inside The World of Interiors
June 2023

Art & Antiques

The definitive guide

On sale
11 May

IMAGE FROM 'DIE KUNST ZU WOHNEN: EIN AUGSBURGER KLEBEALBUM DES 18. JAHRHUNDERTS' (DEUTSCHER KUNSTVERLAG)

IN THE *Spotlight*

V.F. meets singers Rema and Debbie at The Savoy to celebrate the launch of Center Stage, a partnership between Abbey Road Studios and Fairmont Hotels & Resorts

IT'S A WEDNESDAY night at The Savoy's sleek Beaufort Bar in London. While champagne and canapés circulate, singer Rema is smiling shyly, shimmying on stage in front of the bar. The crowd sings along to his effortlessly catchy music, kicking their heels off so they can dance properly.

The Benin City-born singer saves his chart-topping hit "Calm Down" to close his set, a joyous moment at the launch event for Center Stage, a partnership between Abbey Road Studios and Fairmont Hotels & Resorts. The project offers 1,000 hours of studio time and 1,000 hours of suite time to up-and-coming artists across the globe, while documenting their artistic journeys.

Fairmont has always had a musical connection: some of John Lennon and Yoko Ono's "bed-ins for peace" took place at Fairmont The Queen Elizabeth; Sonny and Cher did a residency at Fairmont Century Plaza in L.A.; and The Rolling Stones held press conferences at The Savoy, A Fairmont Managed Hotel. Center Stage sees the hotel group reinvigorating its musical link, turning its focus to supporting emerging music talent from the ground up, stitching new stars into its historic tapestry.

For Debbie, an emerging London soul singer who is being supported by Center Stage alongside Rema, it's the ultimate boost. "It's made me feel more confident as an artist," she explains, "because if you have people saying, 'we're going to believe in you and we're going to invest in you', it boosts your confidence and makes you feel like 'okay, I'm on the right track'."

Being given space and time by such a renowned establishment is something that neither of the artists take lightly. "The Savoy holds historic meaning," Debbie muses. "It's like being in a museum, getting to look at everything like, 'oh my god, did you see that?!'" It's hard to disagree when we're sitting in the iconic hotel's opulent Royal Suite by Gucci, tucked away from the chaos of The Strand with windows overlooking the Thames, furnished in deep turquoise and gold trimmings by the Italian fashion house. Plus, there's the fact that both artists have been dressed by Gucci for the occasion—Debbie's tights are emblazoned with the inimitable "G" logos, while Rema reclines in rich green and red knitwear.

> **"A PEACEFUL, SERENE** environment is very necessary to meditate, to think and also to write," says Rema. "I've made a lot of beautiful music **AT HOTELS.**"

It's not surprising that spending time in the suite is proving to be inspiring. "A peaceful, serene environment is very necessary to meditate, to think and also to write," says Rema. "I've made a lot of beautiful music at hotels." When he's not writing, he says that hotels give him space to rest, have his "essential" pre-show nap, and listen to music, led by whatever mood the decor puts him in.

In The Savoy, he explains with a laugh, this has meant listening to his own new music. "I feel like the mood here made sense for the kind of vibes I've been creating lately."

The connection for Debbie is a little less obvious. "When it comes to being inspired by places, it's a weird link for me," she explains. "A place will inspire a feeling, a feeling will inspire the lyrics. So this space—and especially the view—that's what my mind is drawn to when it comes to inspiration. It's this feeling of freedom that I will carry to a lyric-writing session." Being in the hotel also gives her time to ground herself before performing: "I slow down, I meditate, I pray, I breathe," she says. "And then when I come off stage? Shots!"

Following naps and prayers, the pair take to the stage one by one. The setting is glamorous, intimate, low-lit, and possibility brims in the air. It feels like something out of a film. And with Fairmont's aim to take the initiative around the world, Center Stage feels like an astonishing set of opening credits.

For more information, please visit fairmont.com/centerstage

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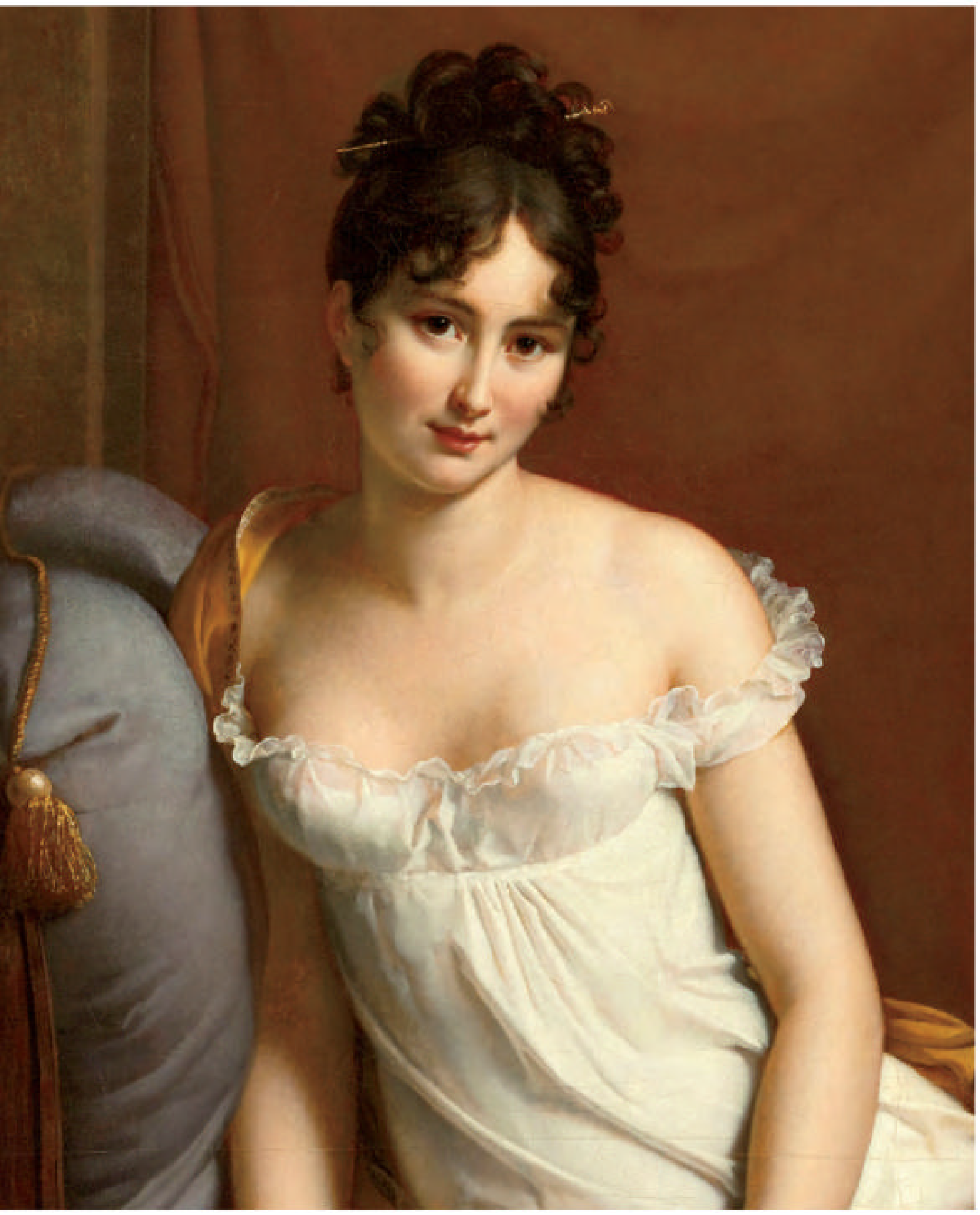
DAVID OLIVER



FRANÇOIS GÉRARD, *PORTRAIT DE JULIETTE RÉCAMIER* (DETAIL), 1802–1805, OIL ON CANVAS, 88 IN. X 71 IN., MUSÉE CARNAVALET, HISTOIRE DE PARIS. BLUSH SHADES: WATERMELON BLISS(HAUS LABS BY LADY GAGA); PINK FLAME (BOBBI BROWN); PINK POP (CHARLOTTE TILBURY); PARTY HOUR (TOWER 28); ROSE DORÉ (HERMÈS); SPICE (AMI COLÉ); MIAMI BEACH (JONES ROAD).

Royal FLUSH

This season's fizzy period TV loves a well-rouged cheek. Consider blush a shortcut to a new kind of frivolity *By Laura Regensdorf*

"I COULD GIVE everything up except for blush." One might expect such a line—absolutist, romantic at heart—to come from the fictionalized Catherine II at the center of *The Great,* Hulu's gleeful romp starring Elle Fanning, back May 12 for season three. But it is a pure sentiment from the actor herself, smiling beatifically from a suite at the Plaza Hotel. Fanning has a soft spot for powder formulas, she explains—easier to pile on, as is her off-camera wont. But *The Great* is where her blush comes fully into bloom. "Sometimes it is a bit overdone, but on purpose because it's kind of a comedic beat," says Erin Ayanian Monroe, Fanning's makeup designer on the show. A naturalistic flush signals joy; extended down to the bust, it accompanies the campy sex scenes. For an empress who calls herself a "delusional optimist"—a one-percenter juggling love and authority—the profusion of color across her visage speaks volumes. "She's uncontained," Ayanian Monroe says.

If blush is a stand-in for youth and titillation, naturally it lights up TikTok algorithms. "Hot girl" tutorials demonstrate the merits of a W-shaped application (to mimic a sunburn) or the aura-like effect achieved by layering different tones of liquid blush. Melt-into-skin versions by Tower 28, Charlotte Tilbury, and Jones Road reflect an approachable ease, while next-gen powders (Haus Labs by Lady Gaga, Hermès) tweak a classic. Still, the fall 2023 runways offered little color on cheeks, as if foretelling a period of angst and economic austerity. At Gucci, for one, global makeup artist Thomas de Kluyver instead used blush across some models' eyes: a red-rimmed look more raw than romantic.

Haus Labs by Lady Gaga Color Fuse powder blush, £31.

Bobbi Brown Pot Rouge cream color, £30.

Charlotte Tilbury Matte Beauty Blush Wand, £30.

Tower 28 BeachPlease cream blush, £16.

Hermès Rose Hermès Silky blush powder, £65.

Ami Colé Desert Date cream multistick, £18.

Jones Road Miracle Balm, £36.

Such a mood makes *Queen Charlotte: A Bridgerton Story*—a prequel about the rouged monarch, debuting May 4 on Netflix ahead of England's real-life coronation—register as peak escapist fantasy. "Blush is something we use when we're feeling more extravagant, more frivolous," says the show's hair and makeup department head Nic Collins, seeing a decadence in 18th-century royal life (when color centered on the apple of the cheek) and in the high-flying 1980s (when blush swept into the hairline). Of course, what sets the *Bridgerton* court apart from other palace tableaux is the diversity of those in power—and wider representation translates to a broader palette of blush. "Blackberry, cherry, a beetroot color, rose," Collins says of the cream formulas (by Fenty and Bobbi Brown, among others) used to perk up an array of complexions. "You're looking for that depth of pigment."

Diarrha N'Diaye-Mbaye, who named her two-year-old makeup line, Ami Colé, after her Senegalese mother, homed in on that pigment load when creating her four Desert Date cream multisticks, with shades like Spice (a blue-toned raisin) and Flame (red that reads beautifully on darker skin). "Because of the melanin," she says, "we don't 'blush'—so how do we show up emotionally, but through makeup?" N'Diaye-Mbaye views her brand as soft armor; a grin on the packaging adds levity, even in uncertain times. "We are the meme where the dog is smiling and there's a fire in the background," she says, upbeat. "That's our way of protecting ourselves and keeping things 'delusionally optimistic.'" ■

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Augustinus Bader
THE RICH CREAM
LA CRÈME HYDRATANTE RICHE

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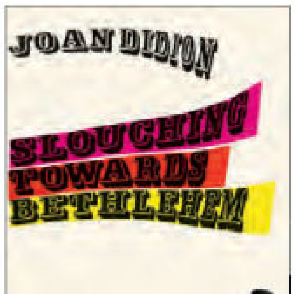
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SLOUCHING TOWARDS BETHLEHEM

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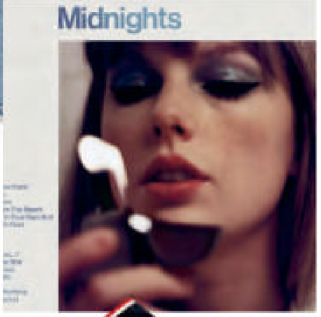

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Born to RIDE

From power snacks to power shoulders, Olympic equestrian **JESSICA SPRINGSTEEN** clears the bar with these favorites

■ *Style File*

DAILY UNIFORM: Breeches and T-shirt! Or, on the rare occasion I'm not riding (12), I'm alternating between a leather jacket I took from my mom and an Acne Studios blazer (2) paired with AGOLDE jeans (7). **EVERYDAY ACCESSORY:** A baseball hat. Plain black ones are my favorite (5). **EQUESTRIAN GEAR:** Tommy Hilfiger (6, 14). **WRIST CANDY:** Rolex Datejust (8). **GO-TO RIDING BOOT:** Parlanti (11).

■ *On Beauty*

SKIN CARE MUST-HAVE: Augustinus Bader the Rich Cream (3). **SHOW-DAY MAKEUP:** Bare Minerals Complexion Rescue tinted moisturizer (9). **SUNBLOCK:** Heliocare Antioxidant Supplements. **POST-RIDE HAIR CARE:** Moroccanoil dry shampoo.

■ *Wellness Diary*

FAVORITE WORKOUT: Power yoga and running. **MUSCLE RECOVERY:** Lots of water. **ACTIVEWEAR:** Alo Yoga.

■ *At Home*

RECENT ADDITION: The Peloton Tread. **ON DISPLAY:** Polaroids of loved ones.

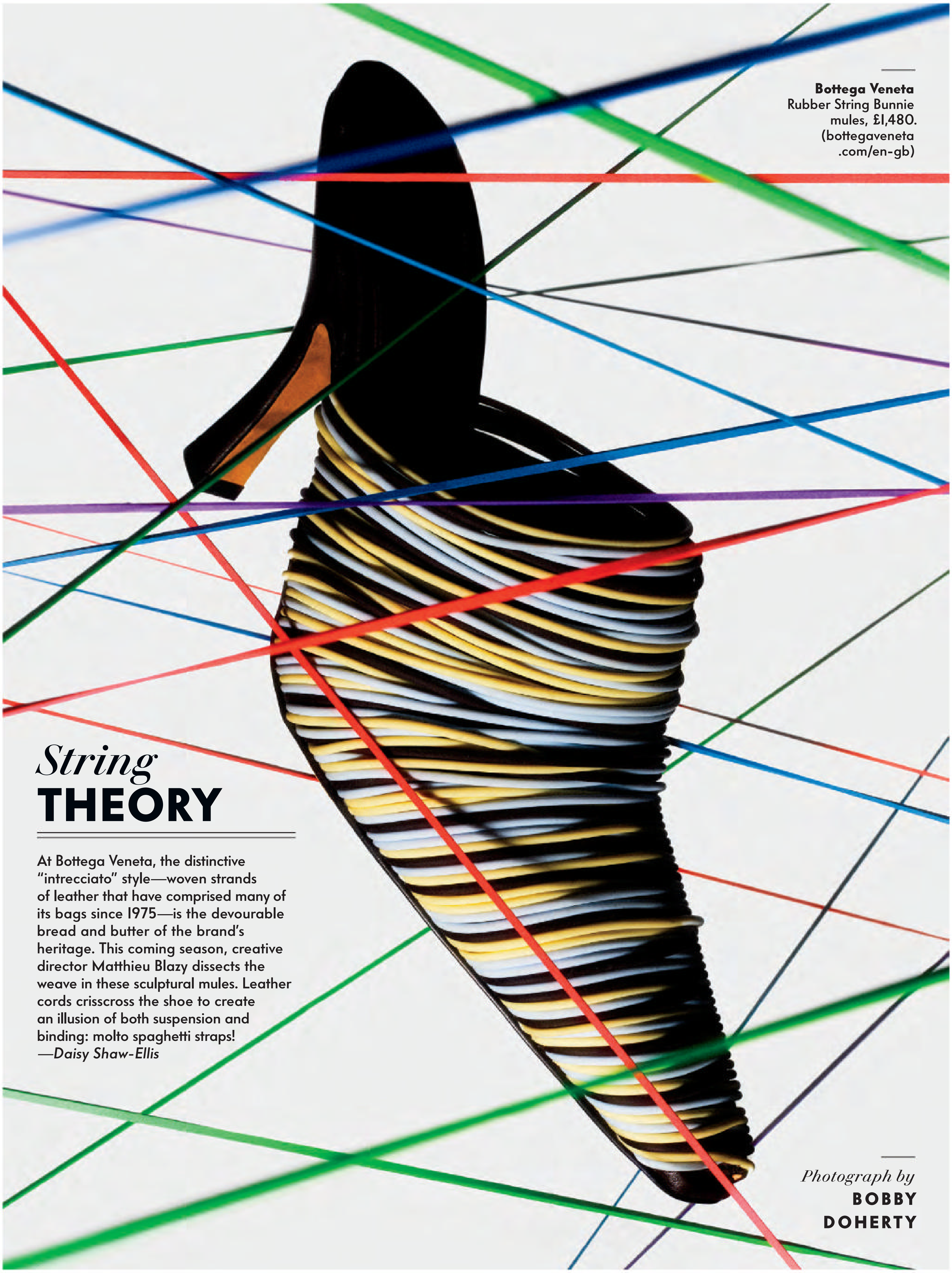
■ *For Pleasure*

READING: *Slouching Towards Bethlehem* by Joan Didion (4). **WATCHING:** *One Tree Hill* reruns. **LISTENING TO:** *Midnights* by Taylor Swift (13). **INSPIRED BY:** The *On Purpose With Jay Shetty* podcast.

■ *The Menu*

COFFEE ORDER: Venti iced shaken espresso with oat milk from Starbucks! **BREAKFAST OF A CHAMPION:** Eggs and avocado (1). **PICK-ME-UP:** Sakara energy bars (10).

SPRINGSTEEN: CHANTELLE DOSSER/FIGAROPHOTO/GETTY IMAGES. SPRINGSTEEN ON HORSE: SPORTFOT PHOTOGRAPHY. TOAST, BASEBALL HAT: GETTY IMAGES. ALL OTHERS: COURTESY OF THE BRANDS.



Bottega Veneta
Rubber String Bunnie
mules, £1,480.
(bottegaveneta
.com/en-gb)

String THEORY

At Bottega Veneta, the distinctive "intrecciato" style—woven strands of leather that have comprised many of its bags since 1975—is the devourable bread and butter of the brand's heritage. This coming season, creative director Matthieu Blazy dissects the weave in these sculptural mules. Leather cords crisscross the shoe to create an illusion of both suspension and binding: molto spaghetti straps!
—*Daisy Shaw-Ellis*

Photograph by
BOBBY DOHERTY

FOR DETAILS, GO TO VF.COM/CREDITS.

Kerry Washington and Ariana DeBose pose with Nnamdi Asomugha

Oscars **2023**

The blue carpet is rolled out and the stars are gathered: it's time for the *Vanity Fair* Oscar Party, which plays host to the biggest names in Hollywood and beyond.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JUSTIN BISHOP AND KRISTA SCHLEUTER

CHANEL
COCO MADEMOISELLE
COCO
MADEMOISELLE
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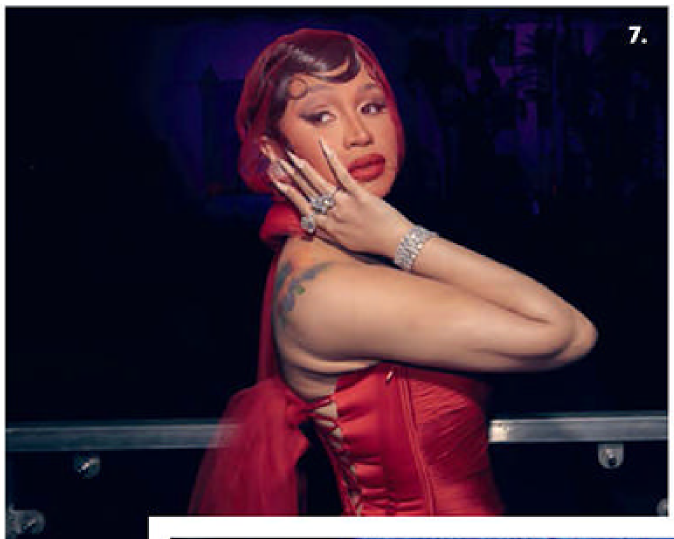
1. Paul Mescal **2.** Tony Kushner, Bill Nighy and Steven Spielberg **3.** Kate Hudson and Naomi Ackie **4.** Regé-Jean Page **5.** Kendall and Kylie Jenner **6.** Gabriel LaBelle, Greg Tarzan Davis, and Danny Ramirez **7.** Cardi B **8.** Sharon Stone, Sarah Paulson, Holland Taylor and Sienna Miller **9.** Brendan Fraser **10.** Andrew Garfield **11.** Olivia Wilde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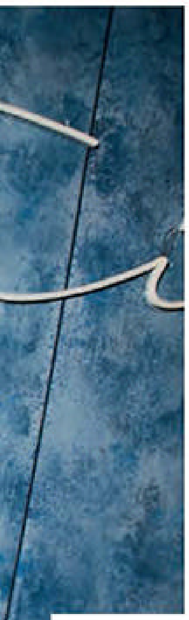

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The ceremony may have ended, but the real revelry got started at the iconic *Vanity Fair* Oscar party, where the best and brightest stars celebrated Hollywood's biggest night in style.

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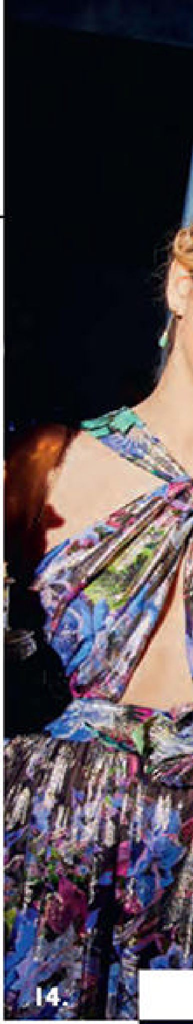

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12. Kaia Gerber and Austin Butler
13. Michelle Yeoh
14. Kirsten Lepore, Daniel Kwan, and June Kwan
15. Cate Blanchett and Sarah Paulson
16. Ke Huy Quan and Megan Thee Stallion
17. Gigi Hadid
18. Thuso Mbedu
19. Ashley Graham and Zooey Deschanel
20. Evan Spiegel and Miranda Kerr
21. Pedro Pascal and Elizabeth Banks

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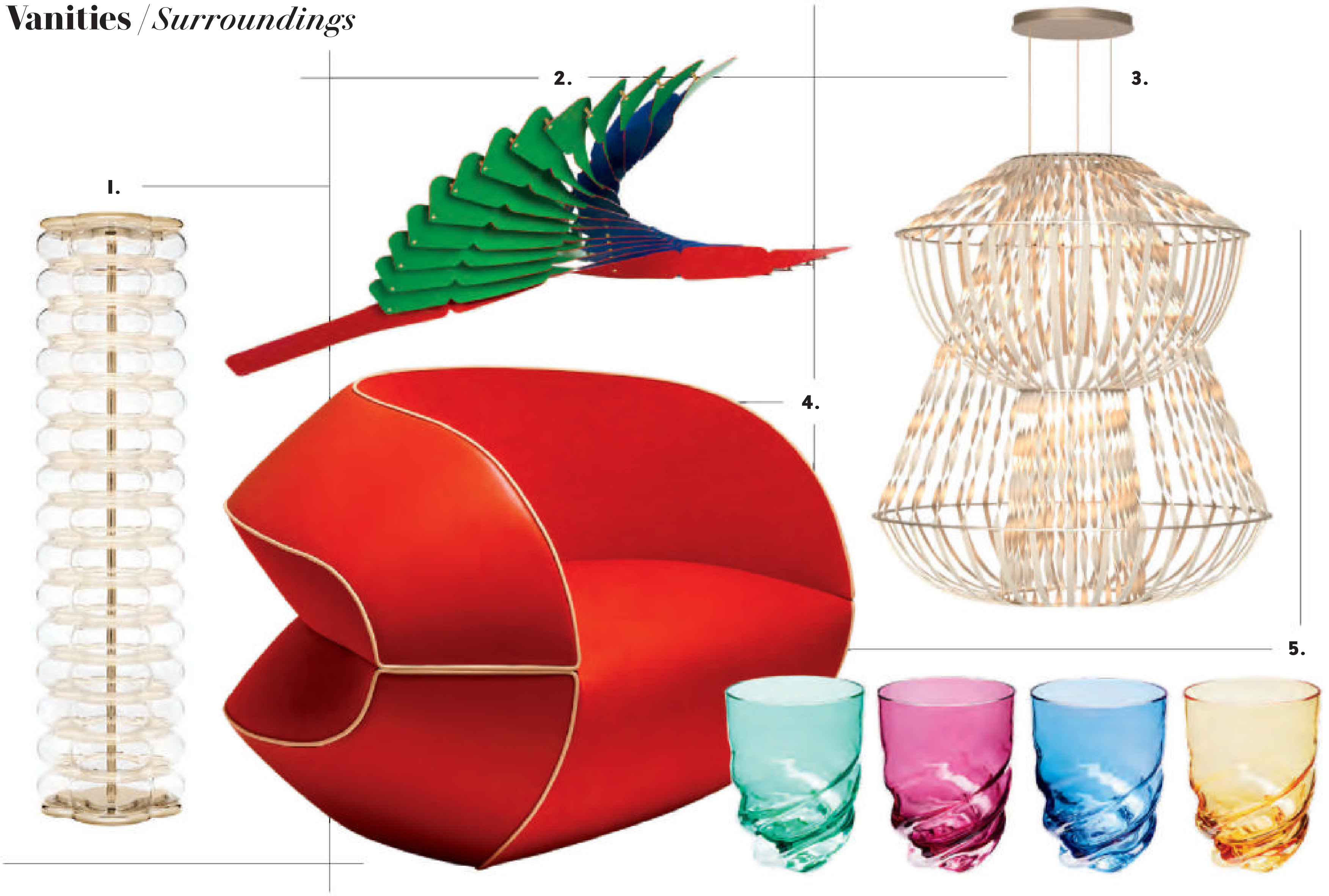


Objects OF ENVY

With these striking additions to its travel-inspired home furnishings line, Louis Vuitton takes interior design to luxurious—and literal—new heights *By Claire Howorth*

THE VIBRANT RED armchair you see here began its life as a tennis ball—if only in the hive mind of Yael Mer and Shay Alcalay. Raw Edges, their London-based studio, conceived the piece (4) plus a matching sofa for Louis Vuitton's Objets Nomades—the luxury house's collection of furniture, art, and objects made by an illustrious array of design firms—which debuts new additions this month during the Milan Furniture Fair.

To the Raw Edges team, Objets Nomades signifies "fun, sculptural pieces," says Mer. "So it is quite hard to sit in the studio and think how we can come up with a new design." Instead, the staff takes "creative breaks" from ongoing projects to dream up designs without explicit brief or purpose. Familiar fuzzy orb, meet wonderfully curvilinear seating arrangement. "There was something so cute and satisfying about this model," adds Mer, "that we couldn't just let it stay on the shelf."

As *objets nomades* suggests, other creators have likewise drawn inspiration from the whimsical and well traveled. For Vuitton's recently opened restaurant in Chengdu, China, the Swiss firm Atelier Oï fashioned a room-spanning chandelier in coral-orange leather; now, they've replicated the twisted beauty (3) at a more intimate scale. And for a literally soaring metaphor, Oï turned to Latin America's quetzal, basing a 22-pound mobile (2), also in leather, on the sacred bird's spectacular plumage; the fanned art can "pivot slightly and hover masterfully," as Oï says, over summer dinner parties.

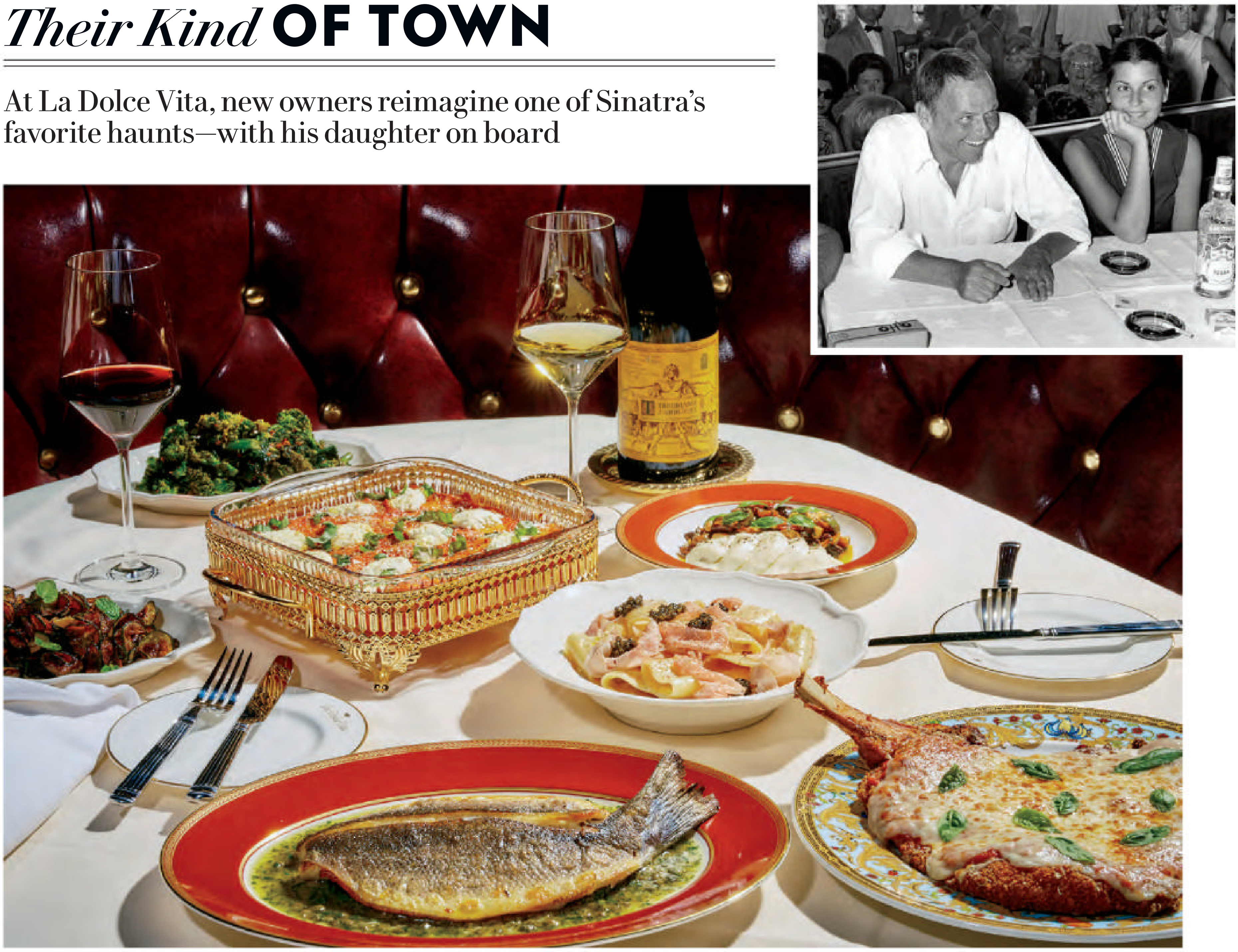
Milan's local talent is part of the menagerie too. For Flower Tower (1), a blown-glass column nearly six feet tall and meant to evoke a cityscape, Alberto Biagetti and Laura Baldassari of Atelier Biagetti nodded to Vuitton's history: From an isometric perspective, you can see the fashion brand's geometric floral motif (trademarked as part of its monogram in 1896) take luminous shape. Along with special pieces that are more form than function—like a mercury-blob sofa and "cocoon" chandelier (neither pictured) by Campana, based on their own previous designs for Objets Nomades— the lighting and furniture comprise Vuitton's largest works, some of which are made-to-order (prices upon request).

Littler gems form a *sous-collection* called Petits Nomades, like the sparkling glassware (5)—designed in-house by Studio Louis Vuitton; £365 for a pair of tumblers—in colorways that suggest a cool 1970s cocktail bar. Who doesn't want to drink through rose-colored glasses? ■

PHILIPPE LACOMBE/LOUIS VUITTON.

Their Kind OF TOWN

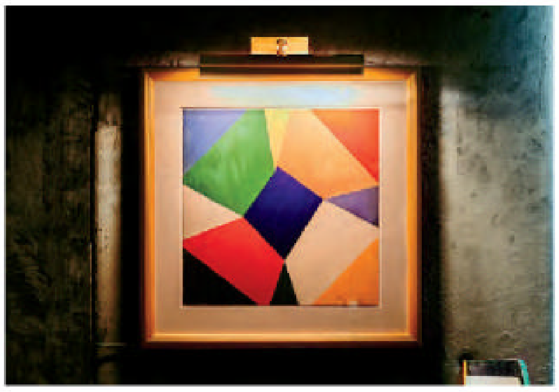
At La Dolce Vita, new owners reimagine one of Sinatra's favorite haunts—with his daughter on board



"I HAVE AN overacute capacity for sadness as well as elation," Frank Sinatra told *Playboy* in 1963. "I guess the audience feels it along with me. They can't help it. Sentimentality, after all, is an emotion common to all humanity." It's perhaps no surprise that the crooner found a side hustle in another deeply emotional medium: food. Three years later, he became a founding investor in the red sauce restaurant La Dolce Vita, a slice of Italian New York nestled in the heart of Beverly Hills.

Now, 57 years on and following a three-year closure, La Dolce Vita's new owners Med Abrous and Marc Rose (the NYC-born restaurateurs behind Genghis Cohen and the Spare Room) are channeling those strong feelings. "A romanticism goes along with these types of places," says Abrous of white tablecloth dining, "and for us it's about getting back to what makes going out so special." The restaurant, which reopened in March, serves negronis and 50/50 martinis mixed at the seven-seat bar—the stools are reproductions of Charles Hollis Jones's 1960s Sinatra model, and a lithograph of one of the singer's paintings hangs prominently—while in the all-booth dining room, brick walls are washed in lilac and the staff wears buttery wool jackets designed by Denis Frison, with gold buttons from the restaurant's original uniforms. Rose recommends ordering family style: a bottle of Barolo, Clams Oreganata, Bucatini al Limone, a Caesar salad, Shrimp Fra Diavolo, Veal Parmigiana, and Spumoni for dessert.

And this iteration will once again be Sinatra-backed. The singer's daughter Tina, a film producer, is investing in the place where she once celebrated special occasions with her father. "He loved to sit at a round table in the lounge area—never with his back to the door," she says, "and dine with a handful of friends." —KEZIAH WEIR



From top: Frank Sinatra and his daughter Tina Sinatra in 1969; a La Dolce Vita tablescape; Sinatra's *Fly Me to the Moon* lithograph.

SINATRAS: RON GALELLA/GETTY IMAGES. TABLETOP AND LITHOGRAPH: SHELBY MOORE.

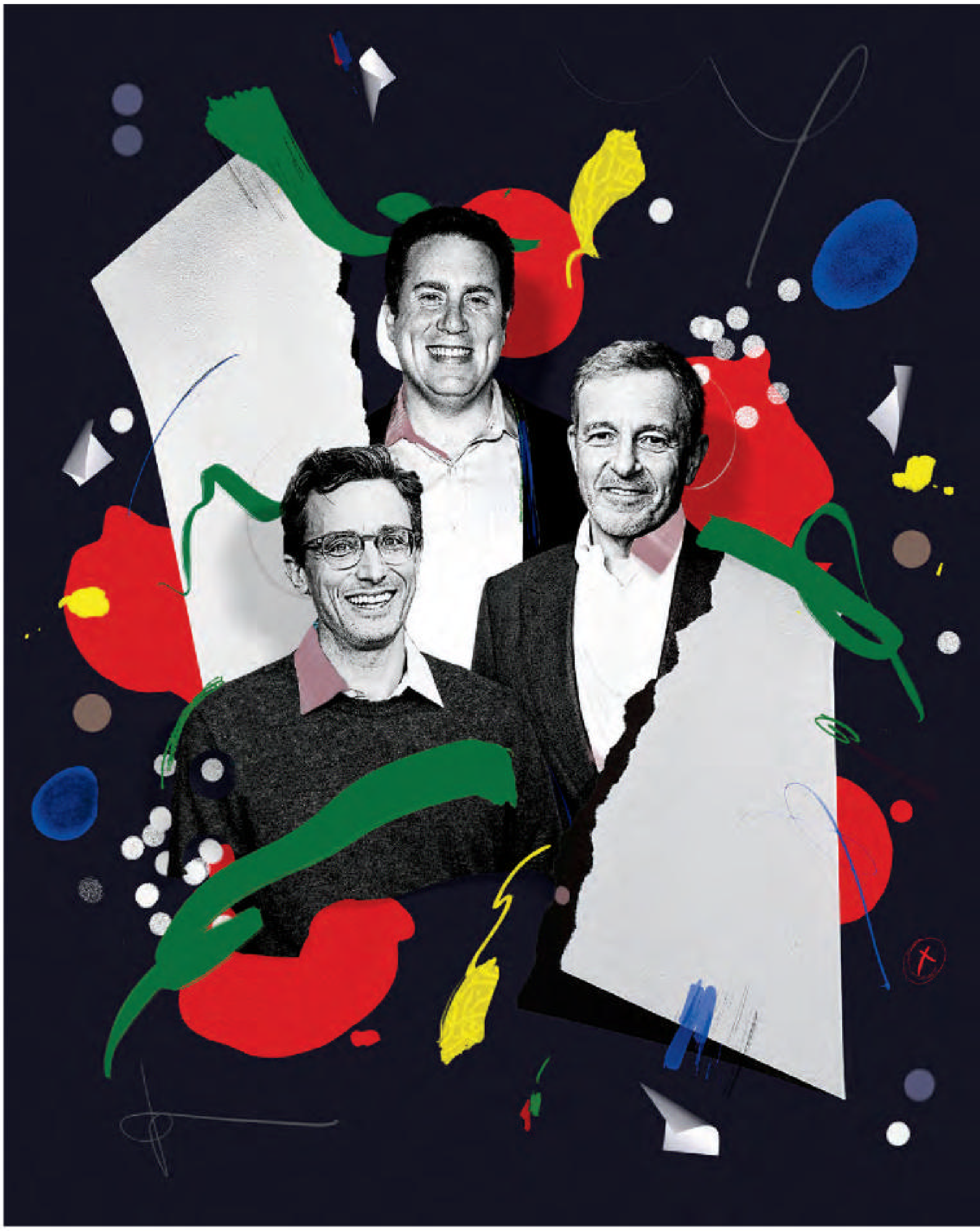
MOUSETRAP

In 2013, Jonah Peretti blew up a nearly half-billion-dollar Disney-BuzzFeed deal—then rode the digital media wave until it crashed *By Ben Smith*

BY THE END of 2013, BuzzFeed was having it all. Our traffic hit 130 million unique visitors a month, riding Facebook's relentless growth. Some of our competitors had begun to imitate everything we did, which mostly amounted to making lists. Others promised to do the same thing we were, but without the embarrassing memes. In Silicon Valley, an ambitious former Goldman Sachs banker named Carlos Watson persuaded an old friend, Laurene Powell Jobs, to finance a website called Ozy that would aim to be a smarter, slicker, more socially conscious BuzzFeed. And in that frothy moment, it seemed to make sense for America's best media company, and its safest brand, to buy us.

Disney, to the degree it had been aware of BuzzFeed at all, had noticed the rather generous interpretation of fair use of its copyrights in items like "Which Disney Princess Are You?" But Disney was also scrambling to figure out how it fit into a rapidly changing digital world, and in the spring of 2013, Ben Sherwood, the former wunderkind producer turned president of ABC News, which Disney owned, sat with the company's chief executive, Bob Iger, at the Coral Tree Café in Brentwood and asked him if he'd ever heard of BuzzFeed. Iger said he had but hadn't really looked deeply into it. Sherwood explained that ABC News, in his view, had fallen dangerously out of sync with the times as corporate media lumbered toward what would be referred to in conference room PowerPoints as "digital transformation." What the place really needed, he said, was a DNA transfer.

BuzzFeed was the mid-aughts brainchild of Jonah Peretti, an online culture jammer turned business operator who had already cofounded left-leaning juggernaut The Huffington Post with Arianna Huffington, Kenneth Lerer, and the late Andrew Breitbart. When I joined BuzzFeed as editor-in-chief in 2011, it was a popular destination



BUZZKILL Jonah Peretti, Ben Smith, and Bob Iger couldn't make this megadeal a reality.

ILLUSTRATION BY SELMAN HOŞGÖR

for videos of cuddly critters and viral memes. I was tasked with building a news operation propelled by the social web, and as the Twitter-fueled 2012 election got going, we were competing with legacy media stalwarts and newcomers like my former employer, Politico, and getting on the radar of behemoths like Disney.

If Disney bought BuzzFeed, the entertainment giant could massively increase the internet company's value by juicing its ad sales—and meanwhile, BuzzFeed would BuzzFeed-ify ABC News's website and reverse its aging audience demographics. Iger liked what he saw, and he knew he could get in touch with Lerer, with whom he'd discussed a Huffington Post investment in 2008 and who was now BuzzFeed's chairman. Iger's deal guy, Kevin Mayer, a rangy, gregarious executive whom many saw as the next CEO, liked it too. Disney needed a way to deliver its shows on the internet and to circumvent the movie theaters and television stations that represented the dying 20th century.

Peretti huddled with Lerer and, on September 30, emailed him a long list of the things that would make him want to do the deal—at a price, he proposed, of $600 million. "I want to chase Yahoo and MSN in scale and the NYT in quality," Peretti wrote. He proposed developing a "new cast of online only Disney characters in collaboration with Disney team.... One of them should be gay, all of them should be inspiring, have good values, and a contemporary, positive style." Plus, he would insist on "continued editorial independence for Ben Smith." He and I were in the middle of recruiting a star investigative editor, Mark Schoofs, from the nonprofit ProPublica, and he had an inkling of how hard it would be to make money in that line of work, so he proposed asking for $5 million a year for investigative journalism. Through the fall of 2013, Iger talked to Peretti and Lerer as Disney accountants and strategists quietly examined BuzzFeed's books, and on October 24, we were invited to the House of Mouse.

GETTY IMAGES.

We traveled to Los Angeles with a pretext: BuzzFeed was opening a cavernous new office, a former soap factory on Beverly Boulevard. But the real point of the trip was the meeting at Disney's studios in Burbank, a set of old Hollywood buildings designed by Walt himself. Iger met us at the top of the elevator in the softly lit executive floor. He was alone, relaxed, wearing a sweater, and acting like an uncle who was thrilled you'd made it in time for Thanksgiving dinner. Peretti was wearing a button-down shirt with three shades of brown checks, crisp but not tucked in. The event had the false informality of all contemporary business meetings. Iger had just gotten back from Washington, he mentioned, and was so grateful we'd been able to make time for him. (He didn't mention he'd been meeting with President Barack Obama.) I sat on one side of the long table with Peretti, BuzzFeed president Jon Steinberg, and Ze Frank, Peretti's old internet friend who had started BuzzFeed's fast-growing video arm. A half dozen Disney executives sat on the other.

> From the perspective of a **MEDIA COMPANY,** an offer from Disney was like getting into Harvard. From the perspective of a venture-backed start-up, **THE DEAL WAS A NO-BRAINER.**

Iger and Peretti each delivered long speeches laying out the companies' value to each other. Peretti had been making a study of Iger and had come to understand that the role of a CEO at that level was twofold: Iger was a banker, deciding where to allocate resources, and a politician, finessing personal relationships and a public message. I watched Peretti imitate Iger, then watched Iger mirror Peretti's own speech back to him, structuring his discussion of Disney's plans to match Peretti's monologue on BuzzFeed's aspirations. To Peretti, this was Disney's most compelling aspect—the chance to study a true master and to learn from him, to be one of 13 people reporting directly to the most successful CEO in modern media.

We drove back from the lot to Palihotel, a slick-looking but inexpensive spot on Melrose, where Peretti's room had a balcony over an alley. Steinberg had finagled a prescription for legal marijuana, then a novelty, and while we smoked, Peretti solicited our input. I told him that we were building something great at BuzzFeed, that we were just getting started, that Disney's corporate culture would stifle us. Frank had already told him the same. Steinberg was shocked we'd consider saying no. He'd left the meeting with Iger on a high, believing that his longtime dream was coming true. Steinberg had loved Disney since he was a 15-year-old intern there: He had spent the best summer of his life working on the *Aladdin* virtual reality attraction, and he still took his family to the theme parks every year. From the perspective of a media company, an offer from Disney was like getting into Harvard, Steinberg said. And from the perspective of a venture-backed start-up, the deal was a no-brainer too. Steinberg's father was a top Manhattan real estate broker, and he'd taught his son the industry wisdom that the first offer you get is probably the best one. Steinberg got down on his knees on the balcony to plead with Peretti to take the deal.

While I receded into a corner, alternately spaced out and laughing hysterically, and while Steinberg begged, Peretti grew even more abstracted than usual. He conducted a kind of Socratic dialogue with Steinberg in which he seemed at times to be talking to himself. He asked why Steinberg really wanted to do the deal, and Steinberg scrambled to give whatever answer would push Peretti toward yes. You just want money, right? Yes, Steinberg said. But is it really money you want? Or is it status? You don't just want a house—you want it in the right part of the Hamptons, right? Sure, yes, status. Steinberg tried to lead Peretti back toward the wisdom of the deal—but Peretti seemed to be exploring his own motives, wondering what he actually wanted as he towered over Steinberg, laughing. Peretti didn't seem to care about money, and he had a kind of reverse snobbery about the status money would buy. He didn't even like the theme parks, Peretti told his appalled deputy. Steinberg was crushed and furious at me and at Frank; he believed, probably rightly, that if the three of us had been unified, we could have brought Peretti along. Steinberg and I both stumbled to bed, convinced Peretti would turn the deal down.

BACK IN NEW York, when the details came in, it became clear that this was an offer that Peretti, almost, couldn't refuse. Disney was the most admired media company in the world, with a record of well-managed acquisitions like Marvel and Pixar. The price on offer was $450 million with the potential of earning $200 million more, an extraordinary sum for a company that had priced itself at less than half that just nine months earlier, and whose connection to Disney—a company obsessively protective of its image and its wholesome brands—was just a series of posts like "21 Completely Bizarre Moments in Disney History" (number five: "When Donald Duck promoted condoms during WWII"). Iger was persuasive. Peretti, Steinberg, and Lerer met nightly in the latter's Upper West Side living room, and Lerer heard them both make their cases—Steinberg's to sell, Peretti's about the risks of being stifled by Disney and the potential upside he still saw in the company's independence. Lerer knew Peretti would bridle at being pushed too hard, so he tried to nudge his protégé toward saying yes. The deal really was, by any normal standard, a no-brainer. On October 29, Peretti and Lerer flew back to Los Angeles, this time staying in Lerer's preferred hotel, the Chateau Marmont. At nine the next morning, they met Iger and Mayer to go back over the details we'd discussed in the same building five days earlier. Then they all shook hands, and at least some of the men left the room thinking the deal was done. And then, on the flight back, Peretti turned to his seatmate: He didn't think he could do it. Lerer, incredulous and quietly furious, told Peretti to call Iger and end the talks that day.

Peretti thought it would be more honorable to call it off in person, and so he instead called Iger to say that he wasn't committed and he'd like to meet again—and suggested they talk after Peretti's planned speech to Disney's management retreat in Orlando 12 days later. Peretti was still feeling his old partner Lerer's anger when he traveled to Disney World in Orlando on November 13 to speak to the company. The event was, for some 250 Disney higher-ups—the people who get to skip the lines at the theme parks—a nearly sacred gathering, running Thursday to Sunday at the sumptuous Grand Floridian Resort. Iger's smooth public persona dominated the gathering. Executives worked out at 4 a.m. in hopes of running into him at the gym and, if they didn't see him, returned at 6 a.m. They were the people who ran theme parks in Asia and cruise lines in Europe, and sold content in Latin America and Australia. They signed up for essentially mandatory and strangely competitive sporting events like softball. When Peretti looked down at them from the stage in the grand ballroom, he saw people dressed like their boss, strenuously casual in shorts and collared T-shirts, ready to pretend to be relaxed.

Peretti had never gotten fewer laughs in his life. He had a **VISION OF HIMSELF** having to explain the internet to these suits for **THE REST OF HIS CAREER.**

As they gathered, Mayer mentioned to Sherwood that Peretti had asked to meet privately after the speech, shooting his colleague a quizzical look that said "weird guy." But if that was how he wanted the signing ceremony to go, that was fine. As they watched Peretti deliver his speech, trepidation grew for the executives who had worked on the deal. While Iger had staged Peretti's speech in a marquee slot to welcome him to the family, the BuzzFeed founder didn't seem to have prepared with any special care. There were no particular references to Disney, to his audience, his future colleagues. Those who had watched his speeches on YouTube recognized recycled jokes—his yarns about the Nike email and Black People Love Us! and his slides of corgis. As Peretti delivered one of his standard, edgy monologues—he liked to ask whether Mormons were better than Jews and explain that the real difference was about the quality of their distribution networks—an HR executive blanched and told the person sitting next to her that they might have a problem.

Peretti knew he could make himself, his investors, and many of the people who worked for him rich. He knew that the decision was still his to make, and while he was leaning against accepting Disney's offer, he took the stage without quite having decided. But the reception of his speech confirmed his decision. Peretti had never gotten fewer laughs in his life. He had a vision of himself having to explain the internet to these suits for the rest of his career while they stared blankly back at him and missed his jokes. The thing he had valued from the start when he built a company in his own image was freedom—his own and others', sometimes to a fault.

Peretti couldn't see himself as an officer on this tight ship. He thought of something his old friend and investor Chris Dixon once said to him: Do you know how many lame rich guys there are, and how few people who really build something? Peretti just couldn't do it. He walked offstage and into a room with Iger and Mayer. There, he told them apologetically that his heart wasn't in it. The deal was off. There had been a car ready to take him to celebrate; Peretti took it to the airport.

Iger, who could blow up and regain his cool within seconds, was furious that Peretti had walked away from the deal—and equally puzzled that Peretti had accepted the speaking invitation first.

"Fuck him, he loses, that company will never be worth what it would have been worth with us," he said to another executive. But there was no looking back. Four months later, Disney announced it would buy Maker Studios, which helped YouTube stars like the gamer PewDiePie sell advertising, for roughly the same $500 million it had considered spending on BuzzFeed.

For Lerer, Peretti's theatrical decision marked the first break with his protégé. Steinberg was heartbroken. He thought Peretti was out of his mind and realized simultaneously that BuzzFeed was Peretti's company. The next thing Steinberg did, he vowed, would be entirely his own. He started racking up appearances on CNBC, studying how business news got made. Frank and I were relieved by Peretti's decision, which meant we could go back to making videos and breaking news. We fully believed that the winds of history were at our backs, and that we'd look down at the pittance Disney offered us one day and laugh. And Frank and I weren't the only ones who admired Peretti's balls. In Silicon Valley, that self-effacing boldness and egotism were catnip. And the charts of traffic and revenue pointed ever upward. Facebook's Mark Zuckerberg, legendarily, had turned down a $1 billion offer from Yahoo! in 2006, defying many of his advisers. Peretti could now go and tell his Disney story to the same people, show off his traffic, take their money, and keep growing.

"Fuck him, he loses, that company **WILL NEVER BE WORTH** what it would have been worth with us," Bob Iger told an executive.

PERETTI'S DECISION DIDN'T look like a mistake at first. BuzzFeed and its generation of media—Gawker, Vice, Vox—kept growing, playing central roles in the decade's culture and news. Even as their revenue numbers began to miss their targets, the growth fueled by Facebook and the sheer sense of destiny kept the hot financial markets open to raise more money, in retrospect, than they'd be worth.

As their businesses weakened and their brands aged, they rode different paths down the hype cycle. Hulk Hogan and Peter Thiel destroyed Nick Denton's Gawker empire. Vice, the best brand and the least credible business of the group, has collapsed under the sheer weight of its own $5.7 billion valuation and appears to be ready to be sold off for parts. Vox has steered carefully through the wreckage and recently raised $100 million on terms similar to the ones it was offering in 2014.

BuzzFeed, which had by then swallowed HuffPost, was the only one to make it to the public markets, riding the very end of the SPAC craze in 2021 to a messy public offering. I'd spent eight years leading a newsroom that, at its best, broke some of the biggest, most serious stories in the world without leaving behind our roots in some of the weirdest parts of the internet. But I was gone by then, writing for *The New York Times,* where I'd managed to make trouble for various of the other characters in my book, an occupational hazard in writing about media when your sources, targets, and colleagues are the same people. In one of my first pieces, I wrote about Iger's apparent return to power at Disney as COVID-19 spread— an article that infuriated his successor, Bob Chapek, and led to Iger's temporary ouster. In one of my last, I wrote about Watson's Ozy Media, which had gone from fake-it-till-you-make-it start-up tactics to an astounding set of alleged felonies. We covered his arrest this year at my new media outlet, Semafor.

In the cold terms of venture capital, Peretti's—our—decision not to sell to Disney will go down as one of the dumbest in the history of digital media. Nine years after BuzzFeed turned down Iger's offer, the company's market capitalization is hovering well below half what Peretti could have sold it for. Still, Peretti says he doesn't regret turning down the Disney deal, and I don't either, though I'm sure our investors do.

At the time, the upward trajectory seemed clear: Social media would swallow the old internet, and we'd rise with it. And for a couple more years, we seemed to be rising, whether we were goofing around in the White House with Obama or breaking news from a darker and darker Trump campaign.

But our big prediction was wrong. Social media turned dark and began to contract. Now, as social media's fortunes continue to decline, BuzzFeed is working to unhitch its fortunes from that generation of platform. Peretti's big new bet is on AI and the possibility of taking BuzzFeed's playful and experimental DNA onto that new, emerging space—the kind of boundless digital universe he'd always preferred to a corporate retreat in Orlando. ■

Adapted from the book *Traffic: Genius, Rivalry, and Delusion in the Billion-Dollar Race to go Viral* by Ben Smith, to be published May 2 by Penguin Press.

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MICHELLE YEOH, Academy Award winner for best actress in *Everything Everywhere All at Once*, wearing Giorgio Armani Privé, with jewelry by Moussaieff High Jewellery.

GOLD RUSH

Oscar winners, fashion icons, and Hollywood legends pose in style for photographer **MARK SELIGER** at the 29th annual *Vanity Fair* Oscar Party

1. KE HUY QUAN, Academy Award winner for best supporting actor in *Everything Everywhere All at Once*, wearing Giorgio Armani Made to Measure, with glasses by Oliver Peoples and brooches by Fred Leighton.

2. GIGI HADID, wearing Zac Posen, with jewelry by Niwaka Fine Jewelry.

3. QUINTA BRUNSON, creator and star of the hit TV show *Abbott Elementary*, wearing Dolce & Gabbana, with jewelry by Jared Lehr Jewelry.

4. Human rights activist **MALALA YOUSAFZAI,** an executive producer of *Stranger at the Gate*, nominated for best documentary short film, wearing Jil Sander.

5. Musician **RITA ORA,** wearing Wiederhoeft, with sandals by Giuseppe Zanotti and jewelry by Hassanzadeh Jewellery, poses with her husband, Academy Award–winning writer-director **TAIKA WAITITI,** wearing Fendi Mens.

6. BRENDAN FRASER, Academy Award winner for best actor in *The Whale*, wearing Berluti, with a brooch from Platt Boutique Jewelry.

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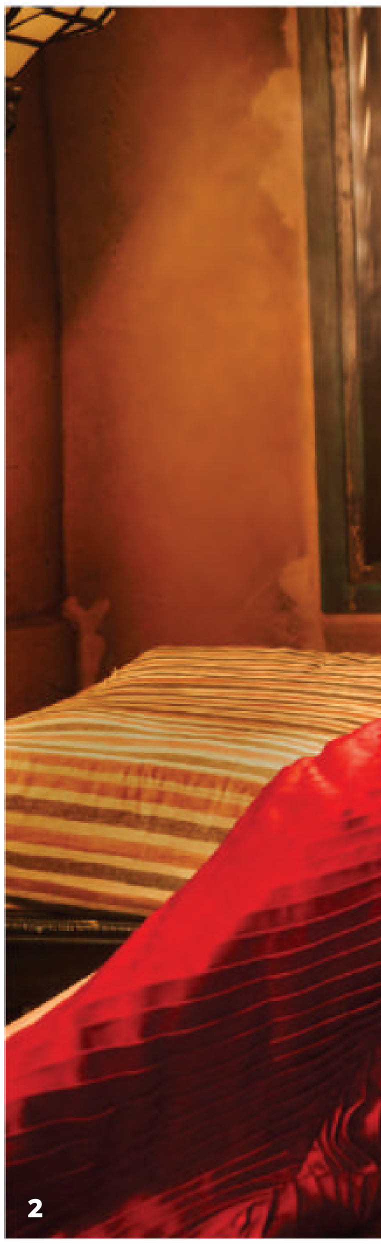
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1. AUSTIN BUTLER, Academy Award nominee for best actor in *Elvis,* wearing Saint Laurent by Anthony Vaccarello, with jewelry by Cartier.

2. JUSTIN BIEBER and **HAILEY BIEBER,** wearing Saint Laurent by Anthony Vaccarello, with an earpiece by Ana Khouri.

3. ANGELA BASSETT, Academy Award nominee for best supporting actress in *Black Panther: Wakanda Forever,* wearing Moschino.

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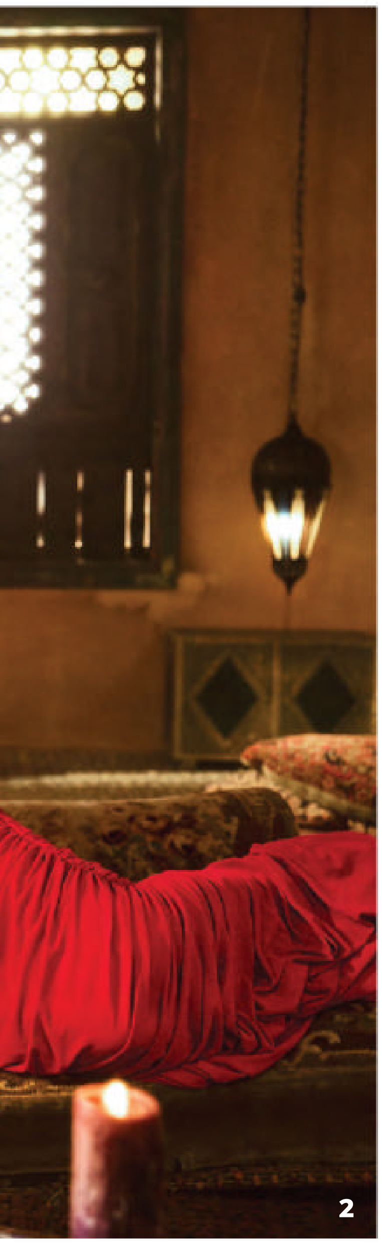
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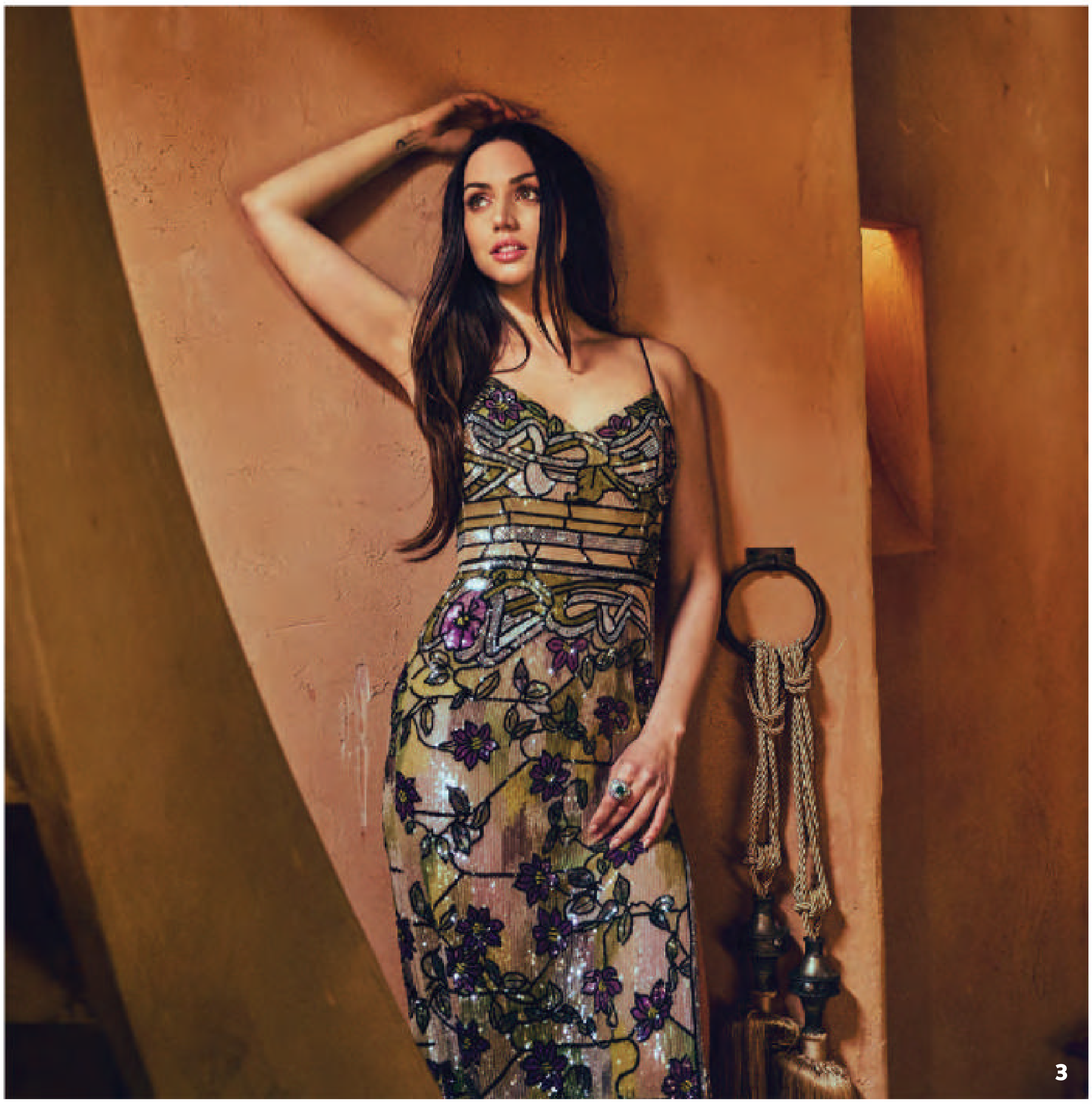
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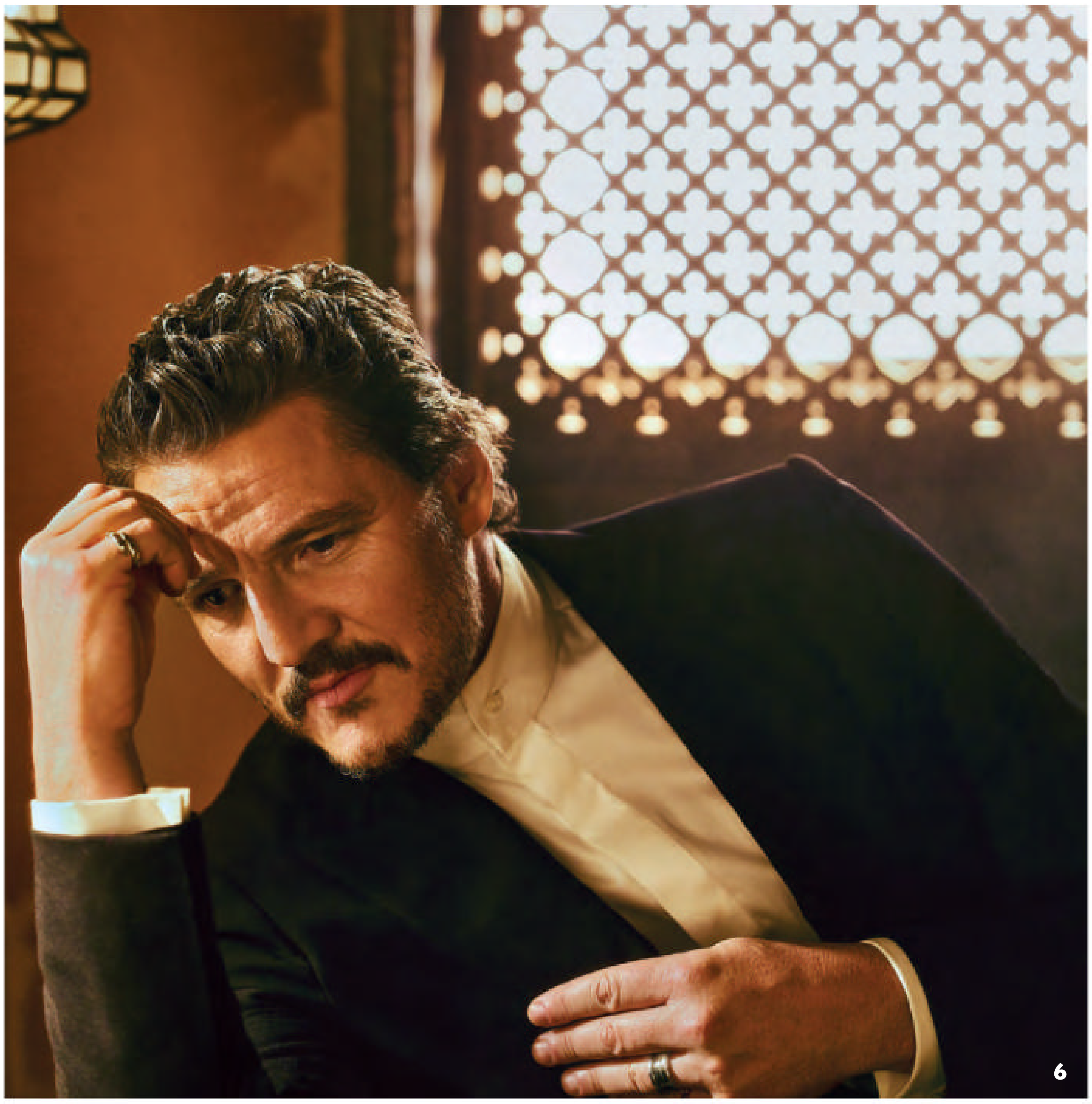
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1. CHANNING TATUM, wearing Giorgio Armani, with a watch by Omega.

2. CARDI B, wearing Robert Wun, with jewelry by Azature, poses with rapper **OFFSET,** wearing Dior Men.

3. ANA DE ARMAS, Academy Award nominee for best actress in *Blonde*, wearing Louis Vuitton, with a ring by Louis Vuitton High Jewelry.

4. The Academy Award–winning team behind best original song "Naatu Naatu" from the film *RRR*—lyricist **CHANDRABOSE** (left) and composer **M.M. KEERAVAANI** (seated)—with the film's director, **S.S. RAJAMOULI.**

5. MEGAN THEE STALLION, wearing Bach Mai, with jewelry by Gismondi 1754.

6. PEDRO PASCAL, wearing Zegna Made-to-Measure, with rings by Bulgari.

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2

1. RUTH E. CARTER, Academy Award winner for best costume design for *Black Panther: Wakanda Forever*, wearing earrings by Julia Koerner.

2. IDRIS ELBA, wearing Eve of Winston.

3. JENNIFER COOLIDGE, wearing Dolce & Gabbana, with a clutch by Tyler Ellis, earrings by XIV Karats, and a ring by Zydo.

SET DESIGN, THOMAS THURNAUER; SITTINGS EDITOR, KIA GOOSBY.

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BY **GABRIEL SHERMAN**

HIS SONS ARE AT WAR. HE'S DIVORCED HIS FOURTH WIFE AND BROKEN AN ENGAGEMENT TO A WOULD-BE FIFTH. THE JEWEL IN WHAT'S LEFT OF HIS CROWN FACES A BILLION-DOLLAR LAWSUIT. WILL THE DIVISION *RUPERT MURDOCH* SPENT HIS LIFE FOSTERING UNDO HIS EMPIRE?

THE KING'S DOMINION

PHOTOGRAPH BY **MARCO GROB**

ON THE AFTERNOON of July 2, 2022, Rupert Murdoch's black Range Rover pulled up to a 12th-century stone church in Westwell, a storybook Cotswolds village 75 miles west of London. The then 91-year-old Fox Corporation chairman traveled to the Oxfordshire countryside to attend his 21-year-old granddaughter Charlotte Freud's wedding. Invitations instructed the 70 guests to wear "formal theatrical" attire. Murdoch emerged from his SUV looking like Tom Wolfe in a white suit, red suede shoes, and red tie. Then he nearly collapsed.

A day earlier, Murdoch was in a bed at Cromwell Hospital in London battling a serious case of COVID-19, two sources close to him said. Over the course of a week, doctors treated Murdoch's symptoms—labored breathing and fatigue—with supplemental oxygen and antibodies, one of the sources said. His recovery was frustratingly slow. At the wedding, Murdoch needed the help of his oldest son, Lachlan, to keep him on his feet. "Rupert was very weak. Lachlan was holding him up to get from place to place," a guest recalled.

COVID was only the most recent medical emergency that sent Murdoch to the hospital. In recent years, Murdoch has suffered a broken back, seizures, two bouts of pneumonia, atrial fibrillation, and a torn Achilles tendon, a source close to the mogul told me. Many of these episodes went unreported in the press, which was just how Murdoch liked it. Murdoch assiduously avoids any discussion of a future in which he isn't in command of his media empire. "I'm now convinced of my own immortality," he famously declared after beating prostate cancer in 1999 at the age of 69. He reminds people that his mother, Dame Elisabeth, lived until 103 ("I'm sure he'll never retire," she told me when I interviewed her in 2010, a day after her 101st birthday). But unlike the politicians Murdoch has bullied into submission with his tabloids, human biology is immovable. "There's been a joke in the family for a long time that 40 may be the new 30, but 80 is 80," a source close to Murdoch said. On March 11, he turned 92.

Although he is a nonagenarian intent on living forever, Murdoch has been consumed with the question of his succession. He long wanted one of his three children from his second wife, Anna—Elisabeth, 54, Lachlan, 51, and James, 50—to take over the company one day. Murdoch believed a Darwinian struggle would produce the most capable heir. "He pitted his kids against each other their entire lives. It's sad," a person close to the family said. Elisabeth was by many accounts the sharpest, but she is a woman, and Murdoch subscribed to old-fashioned primogeniture. She quit the family business in 2000 and launched her own phenomenally successful television production company. Lachlan shared Murdoch's right-wing politics and atavistic love for newsprint and their homeland, Australia. "Lachlan was the golden child," the person close to the family said. But Murdoch worried that his easygoing son, who seemed happiest rock climbing, did not want the top job badly enough. In 2005, Lachlan, then News Corp's deputy chief operating officer, quit and moved back to Sydney after clashing with Fox News chief Roger Ailes and chief operating officer Peter Chernin. That left James as the heir apparent. For the next decade, James climbed the ranks, vowing to make the Murdoch empire carbon-neutral and investing in prestige media brands like Hulu and the National Geographic Channel. But James's liberal politics and desire to make News Corp respected in elite circles rankled Murdoch, who continued to woo Lachlan with Ahab-like determination. In 2015, the older son agreed to return from Australia as his father's heir. "It was a big slap in the face," a person close to James said.

Ascending to the throne and holding on to it are different propositions. Lachlan's future will be decided by his siblings, all of whom sit on the board of the trust that controls the company through a special class of stock. According to sources briefed on the trust's governance, Murdoch has four votes while Elisabeth, Lachlan, James, and Prudence, Murdoch's daughter from his first marriage, each have one. Murdoch's daughters Chloe and Grace from his third marriage, to Wendi Deng, have a financial stake but no voting rights. After Murdoch's death, his votes will be distributed equally among the four eldest children, the source said. "The question is, when Rupert dies, how are the kids aligned?" said a former News Corp executive.

The central fault line remains the rift between James and Lachlan. According to sources, the brothers no longer speak. James is horrified by Fox News and tells people the network's embrace of climate denialism, white nationalism, and stolen election conspiracies is a menace to American democracy. But to overthrow Lachlan and get control of Fox, James needs Elisabeth and Prudence to back him—and that is hardly assured. "James is a lone wolf," the former News Corp executive said. Politically, Elisabeth is liberal, but she has remained close with Rupert and Lachlan; she sat in a box with the pair at the Super Bowl. A person close to Elisabeth says she wants to enjoy the time she has left with her father. "She's terrified of Rupert dying mad at her," the source said. Prudence, who has stayed out of the family business, "is a wild card," the former News Corp executive said.

While the finale unfolds, Murdoch is trying to prove he has one last act in him. But his erratic performance, which has thrown his personal life and media empire into disarray, has left even those in his orbit wondering if he's lost the plot. Last June, Murdoch abruptly left his fourth wife, model-actor Jerry Hall. For two brief weeks this spring, he was engaged to Ann Lesley Smith, a 66-year-old former dental hygienist turned conservative radio host with QAnon-style politics. (Smith told an interviewer in 2022 that COVID was a "plandemic" hatched by Bill Gates at Davos.) "Rupert has been radicalized by his own echo chamber," said a person close to him, explaining his initial attraction to Smith. In January, Murdoch scuttled a plan to merge Fox and News Corp—which would have centralized Lachlan's control over the television and publishing divisions—after major shareholders balked. “It was a harebrained scheme. They got their ass handed to them by investors,” said a person close to the Murdochs.

Murdoch’s most damaging error, though, has been Fox News’s coverage of President Donald Trump’s 2020 defeat and its aftermath. The crisis has led to an existential threat: the $1.6 billion defamation lawsuit Dominion Voting Systems brought against Fox News. The blockbuster trial is set to begin in April, but even if the parties settle before then, Dominion’s legal filings have already publicized internal communications that revealed those at the highest levels of Fox News didn’t believe Trump’s stolen election conspiracies even as the network was cravenly promoting the lies for ratings. (In one email, Murdoch called Trump’s fraud claims “really crazy stuff.”) I’ve covered Fox News for more than a decade and wrote a 2014 biography of Ailes, its longtime chairman and CEO. The Dominion lawsuit is the worst crisis at the network I’ve seen. In their own words, Fox hosts have been exposed as propagandists. “If we lose this suit, it’s fucking bad,” a senior Fox staffer told me.

There is an irony to Murdoch’s current woes. He monetized outrage and grievance to build a conservative media empire that influenced politics on three continents for the last half century. Now these same forces are threatening to destroy his legacy, his still-vast media empire, and the family that stands to inherit it.

“THERE’S **BEEN A JOKE** IN THE FAMILY FOR A LONG TIME THAT 40 MAY BE THE NEW 30, **BUT 80 IS 80**.”

TO UNDERSTAND HOW Murdoch got to this embattled chapter of his reign, it’s helpful to go back to 2015 and a brief moment when he had everything he wanted. He had recruited his favorite son, Lachlan, back to News Corp after a 10-year absence to be his heir apparent. He had rehired Rebekah Brooks, the former CEO of his British tabloids, whom Murdoch treated like a surrogate daughter, after a London jury acquitted her of four criminal charges related to the phone-hacking scandal that roiled his UK business a few years earlier. An American election was on the horizon, and Fox News was primed to put a Republican in the White House after eight years of Barack Obama. At the age of 84, newly divorced from Deng, Murdoch fell in love with the supermodel Jerry Hall.

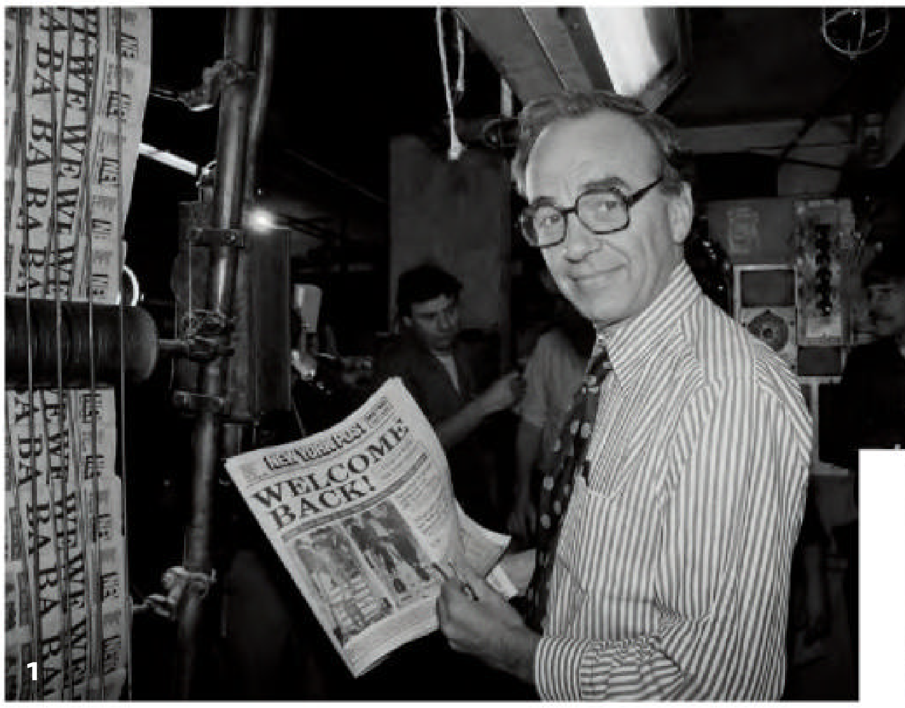
Murdoch seemed like the last man Hall would go out with. The 1970s fashion icon was a BBC-watching liberal 25 years Murdoch’s junior. She previously dated rock stars Bryan Ferry and Mick Jagger, her longtime partner with whom she has four children. In 2013, Hall was in Melbourne playing Mrs. Robinson in the stage version of *The Graduate* when her friend Penny Fowler, Murdoch’s niece, suggested they meet. Murdoch and Hall spent months emailing and talking on the phone before she agreed to a lunch date in New York. When Hall arrived, her hotel room was filled with flowers and chocolates. “He was an old-fashioned gentleman. We laughed together nonstop,” she told friends. A couple of nights later, Murdoch took her to see *Hamilton.*

Soon they were a couple. “They seemed to our surprise very happy and a wonderful fit,” recalled Hall’s close friend Tom Cashin, who socialized with the pair. After a few weeks of dating, Murdoch and Hall flew on his private G650 jet to Texas to meet Hall’s Fox News–loving family. Hall left Texas at 16 to model in Europe, but as she watched her relatives line up to receive Murdoch like he was the king of red America, she realized that her family’s approval meant a lot. Six months into the relationship, Murdoch proposed. “Mick was so unfaithful to you, I’d never be unfaithful,” Murdoch told Hall, according to a person briefed on the conversation. They wed at an 18th-century mansion in London in March 2016, seven days before Murdoch’s 85th birthday. “No more tweets for ten days or ever! Feel like the luckiest AND happiest man in world,” he posted after the ceremony.

Murdoch’s luck quickly ran out. He came down with a bad flu on their honeymoon in the South of France, according to a source. Then, in July, former *Fox & Friends* host Gretchen Carlson sued Ailes for sexual harassment. Murdoch desperately wanted to protect a longtime lieutenant and the $1 billion in annual profits he delivered. But after Carlson’s suit spurred dozens of women to come forward with horrific accounts of sexual abuse at Fox News, James and Lachlan, longtime Ailes antagonists, forced Murdoch to push Ailes out. James seized an opportunity to steer Fox to the center and recruited then CBS News president David Rhodes as Ailes’s replacement. Rupert and Lachlan blocked the plan, with Rupert taking the Fox News CEO title instead. The message was clear: Ailes was gone, but Fox News wouldn’t change.

With a background in newspapers, not TV, Murdoch delegated decisions to lower-ranking Fox News executives. But the network was in chaos. For the first time since it launched in 1996, producers had to make programming calls without Ailes’s daily directives. As they grasped for a strategy, they saw one topic boosted ratings more than anything else: Trump.

It’s ironic that Murdoch’s fortunes would become entwined with Trump’s, because Murdoch found Trump appalling. “Rupert knew he was an idiot,” a person close to Murdoch said. Murdoch was a longtime champion of immigration reform and free trade and loathed Trump’s nativism and know-nothingism. During the Republican primary, Murdoch waged a media campaign in the pages of *The Wall Street Journal* and on Fox News to deny Trump the nomination. Once Trump was in the White House, however, Murdoch went all in. Fox News became de facto state TV. It was a continuation of Murdoch’s time-tested strategy of forging alliances with politicians across the ideological spectrum as long as they advanced his interests. (His



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UK papers had backed both Margaret Thatcher and Tony Blair.)

Trump more than delivered. One source with direct knowledge of their conversations told me Murdoch lobbied Trump to punish Facebook and Google for siphoning his newspapers' advertising revenue. In 2019, Trump's Justice Department launched an antitrust investigation of Google. In 2021, Google settled and struck a lucrative content-sharing deal with Murdoch. The source also said Murdoch pushed Trump to open up land for fracking to boost the value of Murdoch's fossil fuel investments. The Trump administration released nearly 13 million acres of federally controlled land to fracking companies. Murdoch, who sources say has become more pro-life in recent years, encouraged Trump to appoint judges who would overturn *Roe v. Wade.* "Rupert wanted Trump's Supreme Court justices in so they could make abortion illegal," a source who spoke to Murdoch said. Murdoch's alliance with Trump made Murdoch more powerful than ever but carried a personal cost.

F**OR MANY AMERICAN** families during the Trump years, politics became a third rail. And so it was for the Murdochs. Among Murdoch's adult children, Elisabeth and James tilted #resistance, whereas Lachlan was hard-core MAGA. (The eldest Murdoch son was particularly close with Fox News host Tucker Carlson, sources said.) Meanwhile, Murdoch's new wife despised Trump—and let Murdoch know it. "During dinners we had with Jerry and Rupert, Jerry wouldn't hold back," Cashin, Hall's friend, said. According to a source, Murdoch wanted to buy a house in Florida to be closer to Mar-a-Lago, but Hall refused. Hall told friends she was alarmed by Trump's lack of qualifications or respect for the office. At a lunch shortly after the 2016 election, Hall asked Trump to reroute the Dakota Access Pipeline away from Native American reservations that were protesting the project. Trump responded by asking if she wanted to serve in his administration as head of the Bureau of Indian Affairs. "It was horrible. I couldn't wait to get away," she later told friends.

Discontent among the Murdochs simmered for the first months of Trump's term. But after the August 2017 neo-Nazi march in Charlottesville, Virginia, tensions boiled over. James and his wife, Kathryn, a former model and environmental philanthropist, were aghast that Trump's "very fine people on both sides" comment drew a moral equivalency between tiki-torch-wielding neo-Nazis chanting "Jews will not replace us!" and the counterprotesters standing up to them. James confronted Rupert and Lachlan about Fox News's full-throated defense of Trump's remarks. They rebuffed him. "They were both in denial. They didn't want to see it for what it was," a source briefed on the conversations said. Stymied, James took his criticism public. Days after the march, he donated $1 million to the Anti-Defamation League and sent an email to friends, which promptly leaked to the press, that denounced Trump's refusal to condemn white supremacy. "I can't even believe I have to write

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1. Rupert Murdoch at the printing presses of the *New York Post* in 1978, two years after he purchased the tabloid. **2.** Rupert with second wife Anna and Elisabeth, Lachlan, and James in 1977. **3.** Lachlan, James, Anna, and Rupert in 1987. **4.** Anna and James in 1985. **5.** Lachlan in 2002. **6.** Rupert with oldest daughter Prudence at her 1985 wedding. **7.** James, Elisabeth, Rupert, and Lachlan in 2007. **8.** James in 1996.

LINE OF SUCCESSION

Rupert Murdoch has six children with three women and has been married four times. His three adult offspring from his second marriage, Elisabeth, Lachlan, and James, have long figured into his vision for the future of Fox and News Corp.

1. BETTMAN ARCHIVE. 2. BERNARD GOTFRYD/GETTY. 3. RON GALELLA/GETTY. 4. MICHAEL BRENNAN/GETTY. 5. JEAN-CHRISTIAN BOURCART/GETTY. 6. PA IMAGES/ALAMY. 7. TOM STODDART/GETTY. 8. ALLISON LEACH/CONTOUR/GETTY.

this: standing up to Nazis is essential; there are no good Nazis. Or Klansmen, or terrorists," James wrote. It was an inflection point for James. He wanted out. At that very moment, Murdoch set in motion a media deal that would give the younger son a graceful and lucrative exit strategy.

Two days before the Charlottesville rally, Murdoch hosted Disney CEO Bob Iger for a glass of wine at his $28.8 million Bel Air vineyard Moraga, one of the only vineyards in Los Angeles. As the two moguls discussed the rapidly shifting media landscape, Iger floated that Disney would be interested in buying 21st Century Fox, Murdoch's movie studio and entertainment assets. Murdoch would have flatly dismissed the overture in the past. He was, after all, a pirate who conquered media companies, not dispensed with them. But in the streaming age, legacy Hollywood players like Murdoch and Iger lacked the scale to compete with tech giants like Apple, Amazon, and Netflix. The logic of selling 21st Century Fox to Disney made a lot of sense. Plus, Murdoch would get to keep Fox News and his beloved newspapers, the source of his political influence. Disney certainly wanted no part of those.

James and Lachlan went to war with each other over the deal. James championed it for business reasons, but also because he and Iger discussed the possibility of James taking a high-level job at Disney after the acquisition. "James thought about what it might be like to have a boss who appreciates you for what you can do instead of a father that just sees you as the child where, no matter what you do, the other son is always better," a person close to James said. Lachlan, meanwhile, felt Rupert and James were rushing into a deal that undervalued Fox's assets. On top of that, the deal seemed like a massive bait and switch. A year earlier, Lachlan had moved his family from Australia to Los Angeles to be Rupert's successor. Now his father and younger brother wanted to sell off a huge swath of *his* future kingdom. It would leave Lachlan to run a rump state comprising Fox News, a dying broadcast network, Fox Sports, book publisher HarperCollins, and some newspapers. "Lachlan's whole self-image was that he was going to be the next Rupert," a person close to him said.

As James and Rupert pushed the deal forward in the fall of 2017, Lachlan seemed intent on derailing it. At a dinner with Iger, Lachlan unspooled a rant about illegal immigration that made Iger, an outspoken Democrat who flirted with his own presidential run, very uncomfortable, according to two sources briefed on the dinner. At another dinner in New York, Lachlan exploded at Rupert and James. "He said, 'If you do this deal, I'm never speaking to either of you again!'" recalled a person briefed on the conversation. (Another person close to Lachlan denies this.) Unable to quash it, Lachlan reached a breaking point. According to three sources, he suffered a panic attack about the merger and was briefly treated at an LA-area hospital. (The person close to Lachlan denied this.)

Eleven days before Christmas 2017, Disney and Murdoch announced they had reached a $52.4 billion deal. Lachlan would stay on to run Fox News and the family's remaining

WIFE GUY

Murdoch's scuttled engagement to Ann Lesley Smith, a 66-year-old former conservative radio host, followed marriages to model-actor Jerry Hall (2016–2022), TV executive Wendi Deng (1999–2013), journalist Anna Torv (1967–1999), and flight attendant and model Patricia Booker (1956–1967).

1. Murdoch and Deng in 2008. **2.** Anna in 1985. **3.** Murdoch and Hall in 2019. **4.** With Smith in Barbados earlier this year.

assets. In 2019, Lachlan paid a reported $150 million—the highest price in California history—for the 25,000-square-foot Bel Air estate featured in *The Beverly Hillbillies.* James took his walk-away money and launched a media fund called Lupa Systems, investing in liberal-leaning companies like Vice and Tribeca Enterprises. (*Lupa* is Italian for "she-wolf"—as in the one that raised brothers Romulus and Remus, the founders of Rome, before Romulus murdered Remus.)

For Murdoch, the Disney deal was a career triumph. It solved his succession problems. James was out. Lachlan was in. And the price that Disney ultimately paid climbed to $71.3 billion, now seen as a high-water mark of the streaming content boom. The thrill didn't last. In early January 2018, Murdoch and Hall were sailing the Caribbean aboard Lachlan's 140-foot carbon-fiber yacht when disaster struck.

HALL WAS ASLEEP in the stateroom aboard *Sarissa* when she bolted awake at the sound of Murdoch moaning in agony. She later told friends she found her 86-year-old husband in excruciating pain on the cabin floor. He said he fell down a step trying to get to the bathroom and couldn't get up. Hall alerted the captain. He quickly gave Murdoch a shot of a painkiller that allowed Murdoch to sleep fitfully while they sailed through the night to the nearest port, Pointe-à-Pitre, on the French island of Grande-Terre, in Guadeloupe. But the crisis kept getting worse. Lachlan's massive boat towered over the pier, and it was perilous to lower Murdoch in a stretcher. Once they managed to get Murdoch off the boat, they discovered the island's hospital was closed after a recent fire. Murdoch had to spend the night on a gurney under a tent in the parking lot until James's private jet landed with a medevac team. By the time Murdoch flew to a UCLA hospital, he was in critical condition. "He kept almost dying," a person close to the family said. Doctors diagnosed Murdoch with arrhythmia and a broken back. While examining the X-ray, they saw Murdoch had fractured vertebrae before, the person said. Murdoch explained it must have been from the time his ex-wife Deng pushed him into a piano during a fight, after which he spent weeks on the couch. (Deng did not respond to requests for comment.)

Murdoch's PR team scrambled to spin the sailing accident when reporters started calling. They leaked an email to show he was in command. "I have to work from home for some weeks. In the meantime, you'll be hearing from me by email, phone and text!" it said. But in reality, Murdoch was in terrible shape and required Hall to spoon-feed him for months. "Jerry was as sensitive with him as a full-time nurse would have been," her friend Cashin said. Then, in March 2019, Murdoch had another fall in his Bel Air home. This time, he tore his Achilles tendon tripping over the box of a chessboard Lachlan had given him for his 87th birthday. The injury confined Murdoch to a wheelchair for months, a source familiar with the incident said. Murdoch was in and out of the hospital with pneumonia and seizures. When COVID-19 emerged in early 2020, Murdoch's doctors told him he needed to take extreme precautions to protect himself.

While Fox News hosts railed against lockdowns and pushed dubious treatments like hydroxychloroquine, Murdoch followed the science. "He was scared for himself and was very

1. STEFANIE KEENAN/WIRE IMAGE. 2. UNITED NEWS/POPPERFOTO/GETTY IMAGES. 3. TM/BAUER-GRIFFIN/GC IMAGES. 4. BACKGRID.

careful," a person who spoke to Murdoch at the time recalled. According to sources, Murdoch and Hall quarantined in Bel Air without any staff for months. Hall bought robot vacuums to clean the floors, baked sourdough bread, and cooked simple meals of roast chicken, leg of lamb, and vegetarian pasta. During the day, Murdoch watched the stock market and took Zoom calls while Hall took online courses in UC Davis's winemaking program. (Hall told friends Murdoch wanted her to do it so he could write off $3 million of vineyard expenses as long as she worked 500 hours a year on winemaking.) At night, she and Murdoch played chess, backgammon, and gin rummy. She usually won, she told friends, except when they played Liar's Dice. "He's a good liar!" she told them.

Murdoch was one of the first people in the world to be vaccinated in December 2020. As the months dragged on, Murdoch grew increasingly irate with Trump's erratic pandemic policies, like the time Trump suggested Americans inject themselves with bleach to kill the virus. "Rupert had a strong view about how things were being mishandled," a former Trump administration official said. Through Fox News, Murdoch had more power than anyone in America to pressure Trump to take the pandemic seriously. He did nothing. In fact, he took no responsibility for the COVID misinformation Fox News pumped out day after day. When a friend told Murdoch that the channel was literally killing its elderly audience, Murdoch replied, "They're dying from old age and other illnesses, but COVID was being blamed," said a source briefed on the conversation. Having milked Trump for ratings and profit, Murdoch was looking toward a post-Trump future. Shortly before the 2020 election, according to the source, Murdoch invited Florida governor Ron DeSantis and his wife, Casey, for lunch at Murdoch's vineyard. As they dined outside on steak, Murdoch told DeSantis that Fox News would support him for president in 2024.

Murdoch was over Trump, but the Fox News audience most certainly wasn't. The disconnect would soon ignite the biggest journalistic scandal in Fox's history. On election night, according to a source, Murdoch was home in Bel Air following the results on television and fielding calls. At 11:20 p.m. Eastern, Fox News was the first major network to declare Arizona, a crucial battleground state, for Joe Biden, which would all but ensure his election. The Trump voters' official safe space was the first to break the bad news.

The call exploded like a bomb inside the Trump campaign and sent shock waves ripping through Fox News. Trump's son-in-law Jared Kushner called Murdoch and implored him to retract the Arizona call. Murdoch later testified he told Kushner, "Well, the numbers are the numbers." The call became a target of Trump's rage. "This is an embarrassment to this country. We were getting ready to win this election. Frankly, we did win this election," Trump declared at an angry early morning press conference in the East Room of the White House as Biden led Arizona by 10,000 votes. As Trump cried fraud, Murdoch told Fox executives that it was "bullshit and damaging" that Trump refused to concede. Murdoch told Fox News CEO Suzanne Scott that Fox shouldn't promote Trump's stolen election claims, according to court documents. "If Trump becomes a sore loser we should watch Sean [Hannity] especially and others don't sound the same. Not there yet but a danger," Murdoch emailed Scott.

But in the post-truth world Fox News viewers inhabited, numbers didn't matter. Fox viewers believed Trump's baseless claims that the election was stolen because Trump said so. What's more, many loyal Fox News watchers and Trump diehards bristled that the network had seemingly had a hand in delivering their president's election night defeat. The irony of a news outlet being punished by its most ardent audience members for committing an act of journalism didn't have much time to settle, as a siege mentality quickly set in. In the days after the election, Fox News hosts and executives panicked as they watched viewers flip to rival channels Newsmax and One America News, whose programs were hyping Trump's stolen election conspiracies. "Do the executives understand how much credibility and trust we've lost with our audience? We're playing with fire…An alternative like newsmax could be devastating to us," Tucker Carlson texted his producer the day Fox declared Biden the president-elect. In an email conversation, Scott told Murdoch that Fox News needed to appease Trump's base immediately. "We need to make sure they know we aren't abandoning them and still champions for them," she wrote. Murdoch told her he agreed.

What Murdoch did next, or more accurately *didn't* do, formed the core of Dominion Voting Systems' $1.6 billion defamation lawsuit against Fox News. According to Dominion's court filings, Murdoch protected Fox News's ratings by allowing the network's hosts and guests to promote a batshit-crazy theory that algorithms inside Dominion machines secretly switched votes to Biden to steal the election, somehow at the behest of the Venezuelan government. Meanwhile, Murdoch looked for other measures to mollify Trump's audience. On November 20, Murdoch suggested to Scott that Fox fire its Washington managing editor, Bill Sammon, who was a senior executive on the Decision Desk that made the Arizona call. "Maybe best to let Bill go right away which would be a big message with Trump people," Murdoch said, according to court filings. Sammon retired in January 2021, the same month Fox let go of Chris Stirewalt, another Decision Desk member. According to court documents, Murdoch even discussed buying the rights to *The Apprentice*.

"JAMES SEES **DESTROYING** FOX NEWS AS HIS **MISSION IN LIFE**."

1. Prudence in 2016. **2.** James and his wife, Kathryn, in 2022. **3.** Lachlan and Rupert in 2004. **4.** Lachlan and his wife, Sarah, at the White House in 2019 at a state dinner hosted by President Donald Trump in honor of Australian prime minister Scott Morrison. **5.** Elisabeth in 2009. **6.** Lachlan and James in Sun Valley, Idaho, in 2016.

By mainstreaming Trump's stolen election conspiracy, Murdoch and Fox had unleashed dangerous authoritarian forces. Just how dangerous became apparent on January 6, 2021, when a pro-Trump mob rampaged through the Capitol trying to stop Congress from certifying Biden's election. Murdoch was horrified as he and Hall watched the attack unfold from home. Murdoch told Hall that Trump was "trying to kill Mike Pence because he was passing the presidency to Biden," said a source who spoke with Murdoch that day. "Rupert kept calling the White House, Trump, Jared, Sean Hannity, Paul Ryan, Mitch McConnell, trying to get Trump to stop it," said the source. But then, like a passing storm, Murdoch's outrage gave way to a sunnier view of the events. He later told Hall the rioters were just good old boys who got carried away, the source said. Murdoch's ability to blithely rationalize the violence on January 6 is a microcosm of how he evaded any responsibility for the immense damage his media empire has done to the public square over the past 50 years.

AS CHAOS ENGULFS Murdoch's empire, a shadow war over its future is playing out inside the family. Who among the Murdoch siblings will control the spoils, though, remains an open question. Two people close to James told me he is biding his time until he and his sisters can wrest control from Lachlan after Rupert is gone. "James, Liz, and Prudence will join forces and take over the company," a former Fox executive said. Some think James would purge Fox News and transform the network into a center-right alternative to CNN. Others think James would opt to sell Fox News to a private equity firm just so he could be rid of a toxic asset. Inside the network, there's a visceral fear of what a James-led future would mean. "James sees destroying Fox News as his mission in life," a senior Fox staffer told me.

Then again, does Lachlan even want the throne? Several sources speculated the elder Murdoch son may be running the company out of filial duty. When his father is gone, he may prefer to live the good life in Sydney. "Lachlan goes to the rock climbing gym every day. I think he has kind of lost interest since James left, but he is still trying to impress his dad," a person close to Lachlan told me. Other people I spoke to aren't convinced Lachlan would cede the crown. "Lachlan tells people he's determined to keep the company," the Fox staffer said. The person close to Lachlan said he's fully engaged in the job.

Of course, none of these scenarios are sure bets in a family as volatile as the Murdochs, in which allegiances can shift on a day-to-day basis and brute expedience often rules the day. Even though James and his sisters are politically aligned, it might not be enough to win their favor. James and Elisabeth have a complicated history. When James was in the crosshairs at the height of the UK phone-hacking scandal in 2011, Elisabeth told Rupert that James should be fired. When the Murdochs celebrated Lachlan's 40th birthday on Rupert's 184-foot yacht *Rosehearty* that September, Elisabeth left before James and Kathryn arrived.

After interviewing dozens of people for this story, I was struck by how sad all the Murdochs seem. Some Murdoch profiles liken his late career arc to Shakespeare's *King Lear.* Murdoch as the aging monarch confronting his mortality. I think the tale of King Midas is more accurate. Murdoch built a $17 billion fortune out of a small newspaper company he inherited from his father. The only thing that mattered was profit. But amassing that wealth required Murdoch to destroy virtually anything he touched: the environment, women's rights, the Republican Party, truth, decency—even his own family. One source said Rupert got word to James that it would mean a lot if James attended his 90th birthday party, but James didn't go. According to another source, Lachlan told Rupert that James was leaking stories to the writers of *Succession,* HBO's acclaimed drama about a Murdoch-like media dynasty. (The person close to Lachlan denies Lachlan told Rupert this.) A person close to James said he and Kathryn believed PR operatives aligned with

"**IF WE LOSE** THIS SUIT, IT'S **FUCKING BAD,**" A SENIOR FOX STAFFER TOLD ME.

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THE FIGHTS TO COME

While Murdoch's four oldest children, and their equal votes, will one day determine his media empire's fate, the central fault line of the family's future remains the rift between Lachlan and James. Sources say the brothers no longer speak.

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Rupert and Lachlan were digging up dirt on them. Lachlan, meanwhile, had to flee Los Angeles because the Murdoch legacy was so toxic. According to two sources, Lachlan's family was ostracized in LA because of Fox News's climate change denialism. Lachlan moved his family back to Australia in March 2021. Elisabeth had crises of her own. In 2014, she and PR guru Matthew Freud filed for divorce after 13 years of marriage.

At the age of 91, Murdoch blew up his fourth marriage. Hall was waiting for Murdoch to meet her at their Oxfordshire estate last June when she checked her phone. "Jerry, sadly I've decided to call an end to our marriage," Murdoch's email began, according to a screenshot I read. "We have certainly had some good times, but I have much to do...My New York lawyer will be contacting yours immediately." Hall told friends she was blindsided. "Rupert and I never fought," she told people. There had been disagreements over his antiabortion views and some friction with the kids over Hall's rules about masking and testing before they saw Murdoch, according to sources. But Hall never felt Murdoch treated these as major issues. Hall and Murdoch finalized their divorce two months later. (One of the terms of the settlement was that Hall couldn't give story ideas to the writers on *Succession.*) Hall told friends she had to move everything out of the Bel Air estate within 30 days and show receipts to prove items belonged to her. Security guards watched as her children helped her pack. When she settled into the Oxfordshire home she received in the divorce, she discovered surveillance cameras were still sending footage back to Fox headquarters. Mick Jagger sent his security consultant to disconnect them.

Four months later, Hall got a potential answer for why Murdoch broke off the marriage. Newspapers around the world printed photos of Murdoch vacationing in Barbados with a new girlfriend, Smith. Murdoch and Hall had hosted Smith for dinner at their ranch in Carmel, California, about a year earlier. Smith was dating the ranch manager. At the time, Hall didn't think anything of it when Smith told Murdoch that he and Fox News were saving democracy. Or when she offered to give Murdoch a teeth cleaning. Or when Murdoch began making trips alone to Carmel, which he explained was because his daughter Grace wanted one-on-one time with him there. (A source close to Murdoch said such a dinner did not happen.) Looking back, Hall told friends that Murdoch had simply moved on, the way he had ended previous marriages. "She was devastated, mad, and humiliated," Cashin told me. On the first day of Lent in February, Hall told friends she made an effigy of Murdoch, tied dental floss around its neck, and burned it on the grill.

In March, Murdoch announced he was marrying Smith, whose life has been a series of operatic ups and downs. In her 20s, Smith married John B. Huntington, a descendant of a California railroad fortune. They divorced, she has said, when he became an abusive alcoholic. She was suicidal, then found Jesus in a coffee shop and became a street preacher in Marin County. She married the country music singer and broadcast entrepreneur Chester Smith, who died in 2008. On Facebook, Smith shares a mix of inspirational self-help talk with Christian nationalism and right-wing conspiracy theories. "The voting process may be so corrupted we may live in

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1. ALAN DAVIDSON/SHUTTERSTOCK. 2. SPLASHNEWS.COM. 3. DANIELLE SMITH/FAIRFAX MEDIA/GETTY IMAGES. 4. SHUTTERSTOCK. 5. AP PHOTO/ALASTAIR GRANT/POOL. 6. DAVID PAUL MORRIS/BLOOMBERG/GETTY IMAGES.

On the King’s coronation, ERIN VANDERHOOF examines how the royal family’s power struggles are playing out in the press and on social media—and whether Charles can revolutionize his family’s PR strategy for a new era

All The

Angles

NEAR THE END

of 2018, the Duke and Duchess of Sussex toured their future home, Frogmore Cottage, a historic white-brick house a stone's throw from state apartments in Windsor Castle. The cottage, part of a larger estate named for the riverside's marshy, amphibian-friendly habitat, is right down the street from Frogmore House, where Prince Harry and Meghan Markle held their wedding reception, and 20 miles from Kensington Palace, where they had been living—and where the mood had started to sour.

In hindsight, Harry and Meghan's escape from Kensington Palace may have been the beginning of the end of their royal lives. The pressures of that year had worn on everyone, from the family to their staff. There had been two weddings (the second being Princess Eugenie's to Jack Brooksbank), a slew of royal tours, and to top it off, allegations that Meghan was a bullying boss after various staff resignations (including that of her personal assistant). Meghan denied these rumors.

This kind of pressure, or the apertures through which it was filtered, was something new and different for a family accustomed to decades—centuries, depending on your read—of public and press scrutiny. A few years before, the family had opened Instagram and Twitter accounts, enthusiastically deploying them to share news and photos directly with royal watchers, altering the delicate relationship the royals had with traditional press. By 2017, they had become the place where the Windsors publicly celebrated birthdays and family moments, sharing the types of photographs you used to get only from paparazzi. The social media push furthermore put the royals at the hands of those watchers and the types of parasocial competition-pitting it seems to seize on and promote. Like Team Jen versus Team Angelina, or Liverpool versus Manchester United, or Gallagher versus Gallagher, aggressive and profane fights broke out between groups of self-described Meghan and Kate fans, and by late 2018, Cambridge versus Sussex had gone from digital match bait to, for better or worse, reality.

The royals have complained about the media as long as Britain has had journalists, or royals, but they have also seen journalists as partners. Because the monarchy's focus is on dignity and continuity, they varied little from the media playbook established in previous generations, even as the British press slowly became a fearsome and profitable machine. The Firm managed the fallout from that era internally, with different palace offices learning to wield power with selective disclosure.

Harry and Meghan seem to have reacted with more alacrity, perhaps owing to Meghan's previous media experience, or her American-ness and civilian background, or both; they've shifted their media approach to appeal to an American audience and a 24/7 news cycle. Nearly a year into Charles's reign, the rest of the royals still seem to be relying on a playbook from another century. When the Sussexes decamped, the palace kept at least one of the social media experts Harry and Meghan had recruited, and it shows in the family's emoji-laden Instagram captions. But Charles, William, and Kate have refused to push back against a media culture increasingly leaving Britons dispirited, polarized, and—as the aftermath of Brexit has proven—economically stagnant. It's still unclear if the monarchy will be able to tell a story persuasive enough to sway the younger generations who view the institution with unprecedented skepticism, but it's never been more obvious that they need to try.

"It used to be that you could afford to stay out of the discussion," says Evan Nierman, the CEO of global PR firm Red Banyan. "You could listen but not comment, you would just keep your head down, your nose clean, and eventually it would all just go past. Now if you do that, you're going to get clobbered by the people who are telling a narrative that runs counter to what you want out there."

The first test of the reign of King Charles III should have been his ability to carry on his duties despite the chaos in Parliament that led to the ouster of Liz Truss only weeks after that of Boris Johnson, his exit just days before Queen Elizabeth's death. But even amid shocking political instability, headlines about discord in his family covered front pages and filled news feeds, illustrating both the ardent interest of the press as well as that of readers. And it's more than just prurient: The family has become emblematic of a culture war in a deeply divided country. Despite its historic insistence on flouting politics, the royal family is now inherently political.

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THE WINDSORS' MAXIM of self-conduct, "Never complain, never explain," widely attributed to 19th-century prime minister Benjamin Disraeli, occasionally came with a third imperative: "Never apologize." With that addition, it's a canny observation about the exercise of power—true dominance doesn't need to be justified. Though the aphorism has been attributed as the attitude of a wide variety of figures in the 20th century—a 1981 biography of Henry Ford II took it as a title, for one—over time, it's come to be synonymous with the stoicism of Queen Elizabeth. The Queen Mother also seemed to be guided by the dictate as Disraeli first used it. The relationship between the royals and the press had already changed measurably by the early 1990s, when the Queen Mother watched the dissolution of her grandchildren's marriages splashed across the front pages of the tabloids with increasing weariness and dismay, as her equerry at the time, Major Colin Burgess, would later write in his memoir.

Engagement with the press is necessary in a democracy because the press itself is necessary. That the UK has retained its constitutional monarchy through centuries when many royal families were deposed is a reflection of its democratic support. In a previous era of rising anti-monarchist sentiment, the 19th-century constitutional theorist Walter Bagehot wagered that an emotional connection to the family would ensure that regular people support the institution it represented. It's an argument that continues to sit at the center of the Windsors' own self-conception.

"I try to be careful about how I use the term *royal family* versus how I use the term *monarchy,* because they are two different things," said media theorist Laura Clancy. Public affection even varies among family members, and Charles has rarely inspired the same personal ardor as his mother. "Will that start to shift the conversation about the institution? The queen had such affective power, and beyond that you couldn't think of her as the CEO of an institution. She was just the queen."

> **"It used to be that you could afford to stay out of the discussion. You could listen but not comment, and eventually, it would all just go past. Now if you do that, you're going to get clobbered."**

Understanding the importance of popularity, Buckingham Palace hired its first press secretary in 1918, the same year women won the right to vote (as long as they were over 30 and held a certain amount of property). Sculpting the royal family's relationship with the media eventually became an imperative part of royal work, especially around major events. Gossip printed in the press, even false, was seen as either benign or useful. In 1923, a tabloid printed a story claiming the Queen Mother had gotten engaged to the future Edward VIII. In reality, she was weighing a proposal from his younger brother, the future King George VI. In 1947, when the family announced Princess Elizabeth's engagement to Prince Philip, the press had been reporting on rumors for more than a year while the palace denied it. After Rupert Murdoch became a dominant player in the industry, the gossip and false reports rarely had such innocent purposes.

Nick Davies, a former *Guardian* reporter who helped break the hacking scandal, said the royal fear of the press is widespread among Britain's establishment. "They've got these two kinds of fear," he said. "The fear that you'll have your private life exposed, the fear that your organization will be destabilized, and so they assert their power."

When the elites who ran the newspapers had more similar aims to the royals themselves, the press took greater pains to protect royal reputations from lasting harm. In the early 1930s, for example, the British press barons agreed not to print stories about the affair between Edward VIII and Wallis Simpson, even as European and American publications were covering it constantly. The abdication in 1937 began to change this culture of silence, as it discredited the press in the eyes of consumers.

It also had the unexpected effect of increasing Edward's popularity—at least as he left the throne and joined his wife in France. Sanitized versions of his exploits had filled the papers for decades without any of the details that caused those around him to question his character and fitness for the throne. Romantic stories had primed some to see his devotion to Simpson as an emotional success, making the Church of England and the royals into the villains. Perhaps the Edward experience, even more than what would follow with Margaret, Diana and Charles, or Andrew and Fergie, explains why the Windsors became so weary of seeing themselves as celebrities.

Courtiers were frustrated when Diana's glamour relegated the queen's events to the inner pages, and skirmishes have broken out over competing events on two royals' schedules. A single bombshell report in one tabloid—like Squidgygate or rumors of Charles's infidelity—could be a news item in all the others for weeks on end.

Yet even as the late queen occasionally felt frustrated by the media, she accepted it as an inevitable part of her role. In 1996, biographer Ben Pimlott pointed out that she was the only royal who didn't try to "have her cake and eat it, when it came to publicity." Her children and relatives, on the other hand, cheered positive coverage

AMERICAN PALACE
An aerial shot of Harry and Meghan's $33.5 million Montecito, California, home, as featured in their Netflix documentary.

MANSION: BACKGRID. PREVIOUS SPREAD: PHOTO ILLUSTRATION, KHOA TRAN; KIRSTY O'CONNOR/POOL/AFP.

while attempting to conceal private misbehavior. During her reign, one of the monarchy's main strategies with the press was a bit of appeasement in the form of inviting the royal correspondents to off-the-record drinks.

When Charles entered his 20s, the impact of a less deferential press was obvious, and in 1979, biographer Anthony Holden noted that the palace's press strategy meant that his reputation had been left to "fantasists." At least for the queen, the bright line for legal action seemed to be the divulgences of former employees. The palace's first known action to bar publication of a story happened in 1983, when the queen sued *The Sun* to prevent coverage of Prince Andrew's relationship with American actor Koo Stark, drawn from the memoirs of a former palace employee. (He was reportedly forced to break up with her after the story hit the papers; the case was settled.) The queen sued again when a journalist from the *Mirror* infiltrated palace staff by getting a job as a footman and reported that she is served her cereal out of Tupperware. (Again, the parties settled.)

"Never complain, never explain," widely attributed to 19th-century prime minister Benjamin Disraeli, occasionally came with a third imperative: "Never apologize."

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AT SOME POINT during the late queen's reign, the original rationale for sticking to "Never complain, never explain"—the tabloids' triviality—became obsolete, only to be replaced by a lesson from modern media theory. The prevailing metaphor in crisis communications is the role of oxygen in a fire—to prevent it from spreading, don't give it air, lest you provoke the dreaded Streisand effect: In 2003, Barbra Streisand (incidentally one of the king's favorite performers) sued a photographer for posting an aerial shot of her house; the publicity around the suit led to even more widespread attention to the photo. The case was dismissed.

The wisdom of the strategy isn't always quite so straightforward when it comes to the modern royals. For one, they are themselves avid readers of the press. As Harry noted to Anderson Cooper in a *60 Minutes* interview, a family breakfast is never complete without the papers on the table. Success for a senior royal means seeing yourself in the papers—for the right reasons. In light of the family's characteristic inability to communicate openly—they reportedly raise difficult family issues with one another through their secretaries and staffs—the perception of the family in the press starts to become an internalized reality.

By the mid-2010s, the big-name British tabloids had learned to ply their attention strategies online, paying plenty of attention to the chatter on social media. And while the daily papers delivered to the various royal residences haven't altered their design too much in decades, the ecosystem they exist in has changed entirely. Perhaps, in the decade between Prince William and Kate Middleton's engagement and Harry and Meghan's exit, the royals didn't realize they were dealing with something entirely changed.

By the time they planted a flag in the form of a policy, it was too late. One detail included in a handful of the 2018 and 2019 reports was the proliferation of a conspiracy theory that Meghan was faking her pregnancy, an increasingly common online accusation that has been unleashed on everyone from Beyoncé to Benedict Cumberbatch's wife, Sophie Hunter. Before Prince Archie was born, it seemed to have mostly popped up in comments on royal social media posts. By the time BuzzFeed looked into the phenomenon in March 2022, it was a torrent of content across platforms, monetized on YouTube, and promoted, the publication claimed, by Meghan's half sister Samantha herself. Samantha has denied the claims; her attorney has claimed that Samantha's accounts were hacked to make false statements. For the last few years, the chatter around Meghan specifically has remained relatively consistent regardless of what she

UNSPARING
Harry speaks with ABC journalist Michael Strahan ahead of the release of his shocking memoir.

COURTESY OF CBS.

does or says in public. Femail, the *Daily Mail*'s section ostensibly for women, has a "Meghan Markle" web vertical devoted to covering the duchess, and it wrote near-daily stories about her in January and February, even though she avoided the press cycle for her husband's memoir and wasn't spotted in public until February 28.

Of these 100 stories, more than one speculated that Meghan is planning to restart The Tig, the blog she wrote from 2014 to 2017. The basis seemed to be that Meghan refiled her trademark, which she has done in the past to ensure that no one else can take over the site. *Daily Mail* used this supposed news as reason to revisit a blog post from July 2014, in which Meghan "reveals her true feelings about royal princesses," including Kate.

The *Mail* has run a version of this tale several times, erroneously attributing quotes about the cartoon character She-Ra to Meghan. But two out of three quotes supposedly from The Tig that the *Mail* referenced in 2023 were actually written for *Town & Country* in December 2017. When another writer also got the attribution wrong, like a DNA mutation, the fact that Meghan had been very informed about palace life and wanted to be a "royal rebel"—contrary to what she insisted when she met Harry—began circulating. None of those records have been corrected. (Meghan has complained that the palace press team wasn't willing to correct various inaccuracies.)

Such a frenzy never coalesced around the late queen, who was grandmothered into the modern era. The theater of an event like the coronation will inevitably read differently without her because male leadership has a different valence in 2023. One sarcastic viral tweet put it simply: "Can't believe they are going to make a MAN queen. This woke nonsense has gone too far." Though the barristers legally became the King's Counsel immediately upon the queen's death, not all changes have happened so quickly. King Charles will appear on Australian coins, as is required by law, but not on the five-dollar bill. (A government spokesperson has said the late queen's appearance was a "personal" honor.)

In his first televised address as king, Charles sent his "love for Harry and Meghan, as they continue to build their lives overseas." It signaled his knowledge that some emotional embrace of the Sussexes would be necessary, if only to prove he isn't a deadbeat dad. They had a low-key presence during the Platinum Jubilee in June and the funeral rites in September as an act of cooperation. But any sense that the prodigal son would shy away from endangering his relationship with the family was shattered with the December release of Netflix's *Harry & Meghan.* By the time *Spare* was released in January, the couple had already stoked British outrage and heated discussion on both sides of the pond. Harry's memoir was so full of stunning allegations and heartbreaking asides that it isn't hyperbolic to say it represents a reputational crisis for the rest of the family.

Edward Coram James, CEO of London-based brand consultancy Go Up, said that by the time of Harry and Meghan's March 2021 Oprah Winfrey interview, the couple had already squandered the goodwill they would have needed to win a fight against the British press or best the monarchy. "In terms of crisis management, a huge factor is taking personal accountability," he told me. "Shifting public opinion towards the belief that you are a victim—there are certain boxes that have to be ticked."

He believes the royals had no need to respond. "I do have the inside track on it, and there is no animosity coming from the palace at all," Coram James added. "They're having a huge amount of hostility and aggression being thrown at them, and they're not being aggressive at all in response. That alone is why the British press have surrounded and protected them."

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AND YET THE fingerprints are there. In the weeks after *Spare* was released, the palace remained as leaky as ever, with reports in the Independent and *The Telegraph* saying that internally the Windsors had decided that Harry had lost his mind. He was "taken in by the cult of psychotherapy and Meghan," an anonymous source told an Independent writer the week the book came out. (Independent editor in chief Geordie Grieg is a longtime friend of Camilla's.)

This February, Frogmore reentered the narrative. *The Sun* reported that Charles had decided to offer the house to Andrew; the *New York Post* spoke to a source who said the eviction process began the day after *Spare*'s release. The couple are due to depart the house for good after the coronation.

These stories—along with confusion about whether Harry and Meghan would attend the coronation and a muted response when the couple decided to use "prince" and "princess" titles for their children—make it seem like the king has chosen his standing with the press over his relationship with them. There is some wisdom to this—opinion around Meghan and Harry has been sharply negative since the royal exit. The disapproval has even spread to their toddlers, Archie and Lilibet. In March, the data analytics company YouGov UK found that 51 percent of British adults surveyed believed the children should not be given titles. (The leftist British podcast *Trashfuture,* commenting on the occasionally lackluster results for children as young as two or three in monarchy-related polls, has noted the absurdity that "Britain has a baby with an approval rating.")

To Davies, his understanding of the scandal that led to the shuttering of *News of the World* in 2011 proved that royal treatment in the press matters because it reflects the risks they're willing to take with the rest of the public. The behavior of the tabloid's royal editor was the first to become public, in part because Scotland Yard, concerned with security risks to the family, decided to step in. Lawbreaking on that scale has stopped, he noted, but despite widespread dissatisfaction with the tenor of the discourse, "there is no significant political movement in this country to deal with the problems of the tabloid press, to stop their endless manipulation of falsehood."

Ultimately, Charles's lack of popular affection could even be a boon to the monarchy in the long run, if it doesn't matter what the press insinuates about your motives so long as the royal family continues to function as an institution. But Davies thinks the biggest risk for the royals comes from thinking that press acceptance equals popular will.

"If you look at the scale of tabloid coverage of the royal family, you would think that must be because their readers are obsessed with royals," he said. "But the weird thing is, they're not. This country is not nearly as interested in the royal family as Fleet Street pretends." ■

PLAYING FOR KEEPS

FLAMETHROWER
Candace Owens addresses the crowd at the 2023 CPAC conference.

When she came under fire for supporting Kanye West through his antisemitic tirades, **CANDACE OWENS** didn't mind. Triggering people is her business, and business is good. **EMILY JANE FOX** talks to the conservative firebrand about political theater versus deeply held belief

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YOU MIGHT THINK it's silly to say that an unpaid intern with six figures of student debt living in one of the most expensive cities in the world has power, until you know that the internship was at *Vogue* in the *Devil Wears Prada* era. Budgets were fat. Everyone was skinny. And that year, among the 20 interns buzzing around the fashion closet, Candace Owens was queen bee.

Yes, that Candace Owens.

"She never took no for an answer," a *Vogue* alum told me. "She was organized and relentless, smarter than everyone—and knows that."

"She was running the show and completely kicking ass," a fellow intern said. "There was not some kind of formal hierarchy, but it was very clear that she was running the show. People loved her."

If not her style. People who worked with her said that she would come to work wearing hats with animal ears or "girl boss power suits" with a bra under a blazer. "Very eccentric and not normal," as one person put it. Yet they all described her as one of the best interns ever. Nobody expected her to continue on at the magazine, though. "She was not a fit at *Vogue,*" a former higher-up said flatly.

Yet nobody was surprised to see her at the center of the biggest controversy at Paris Fashion Week last fall. In a picture she posted to Twitter (and which remains to this day), she looks over her shoulder, beaming, next to Kanye West. The two are backstage at his fashion show, sporting matching shirts blaring WHITE LIVES MATTER. The spectacle echoed far beyond the fashion world and marked the beginning of West's media spiral during which, among other hateful statements, he praised Hitler. The fallout cost West most of his business, rightfully, and thrust Owens into broad fame as a political flamethrower.

A million and a half people subscribe to Owens's Daily Wire show, which airs as both a podcast and a YouTube video through the conservative media company. For an hour, she holds forth with her scorching own-the-libs views on the news. It's here that she recorded her response to Kanyegate, which led many people to question why she fell short of condemning what was very clearly hate speech. It's where, in the conservative fiefdom, she's become the It girl, enough so that just about everyone, including Owens herself, wonders if she has a future in politics. If you see how her staff stays glued to her as she commands their daily meetings, cracks up at her jokes during taping, how commenters online worship her, how the Republican media powers that be—Sean Hannity, Tucker Carlson—feed off her words, nothing seems far out of reach.

The show tapes at a nondescript warehouse on the outskirts of Nashville, partly in order to fly under the radar of people who might show up to start something if they knew where to go. Every morning she arrives at 9 a.m. in a chauffeured black SUV with her security guard and her assistant, a Tennessee native named Savanna.

"The FBI told me about someone who set up a GoFundMe to kill Candace Owens," she said, laughing, as we pulled up one morning in early March. Her patent stiletto rested against a bag of sweets—mints and candies and gum. She told me she sees humor in everything. "I was like, well, should I donate?"

THE INTERNET LOVES good and evil, good or evil, and there exists no one more Manichaean than Owens. For six years and counting, Owens, 34, has been a heat-seeking missile heading straight into the center of every controversial topic, or, better yet, creating a controversy where there wasn't one. She's an unlikely Republican—a millennial who studied journalism and interned at a fashion magazine, and a Black woman in an era when no more than 10 percent of Black voters identify with her party. The second point is particularly relevant, because the present-day Republican Party at best exists among racial tension and, at real, stokes it. When Owens says things that a lot of white Republicans in this country would not dare, they are able to say, "See?"

She appeared on Carlson's show last fall to assert that the two worst things you can be in America today are a Black child in the womb and a straight white man. Around the same time, on her own podcast, she defended herself against people who say that she doesn't understand Black culture. "I have to keep reminding you that I don't want to be a part of this culture," she said. "I want to destroy it. I want to destroy it further than it's already destroyed itself. I want to go backward. Your idea of progressivism is clearly regressive," adding, "This is a new plantation."

In the era of the hot take, hers are the hottest. She possesses a mechanical understanding of outrage. It works, now more than ever, when gray areas, particularly online, do not exist. Even if you're sure you absolutely deep in your bones disagree with her, you know even deeper that it would exhaust you to debate her. "Candace's mode is always doubling down," one person who works with her told me. "She is a very strong thinker whose motto is 'Never apologize, never back down,'" an inversion, witting or not, of the royal

Her 2017 video titled **"I DON'T CARE ABOUT CHARLOTTESVILLE,**

consciousness of right-wing hosts

family's "Never complain, never explain."

I sat down with Owens after she'd taped a show featuring a 10-minute monologue about how shame is a good thing and more people should feel shamed by their bad behavior at airports. I told her that this story is probably the most difficult story I'd ever reported. No one, I told her, wanted to talk to me on the record. Everyone was scared of her. Either they did not want to be associated with having known her or they did not want to risk having her go after them. "And I will," she assured me.

In person, her face knocks you a bit sideways in its symmetry, perfectly made up, with the doe eyes of a Disney princess gone *Killing Eve*. "It's a very good fear to have. I don't take it sitting down and there's a reason for that," she said. "I should be a hero, but they hate me because they can only see Black people as a hero through the vein of victimhood."

Much of her public messaging centers around the notion that the American left has made Black people believe they are victims, which she's called "a mental plague on Black America." Racism will always exist, she says—just not systemically; it doesn't prevent her or anyone else from being able to do something. "The entire Democrat platform is built upon an everlasting stream of victims versus oppressors, and black America is their favored horse," she wrote in her book, *Blackout,* which debuted at number two on the *New York Times* best-seller list. This country does not have a police brutality problem, she has argued, "but we do have a black on black brutality problem in America." The Black Lives Matter movement, she's said, has meant more destruction of Black lives.

Anywhere a hot button exists, she pushes twice. She is resolute about not vaccinating her children and has called it "mutilation" when trans children suppress puberty. She was named in a manifesto by a white nationalist who cited Owens as his inspiration for killing 51 people at two mosques in New Zealand. In response, Owens tweeted, "The Left pretending I inspired a mosque massacre…is the reachiest reach of all reaches!! LOL!"

"I love Candace because her analysis is consistently deep and interesting," Carlson, one of the only people who agreed to speak on the record, told me. "She's not a shallow person, and she's not afraid to see and describe what she considers the bigger picture. That's a rare thing. I can definitely see why people would like her to be quiet, but I hope she keeps talking."

It's not hard to see why people believe that Owens, like Donald Trump and West and even Carlson sometimes, are simply playing characters in our political theater. They are unapologetic and unafraid and keenly aware of how to weaponize talking points to get what they want. Absolute certainty goes viral, and no one is more absolute or certain than Owens. But is it all deeply felt, or is it the performance of a lifetime? "It's such an easy answer," Owens said when I asked her which, smiling and blinking her eyes at me like I was the world's greatest idiot.

OWENS GREW UP in a low-income housing tower on the edge of Stamford, Connecticut, until she was in grade school, when she and her three siblings moved to a middle-class neighborhood with her paternal grandparents. There was a yard to play in, bikes to ride, and a comfortable home. It was Bible study every week, church every Sunday, prayers before every meal. Her grandfather was raised on a sharecropping farm in Fayetteville, North Carolina, during Jim Crow—he'd dodged the bullets of Klansmen. He went north when he was 16, married at 17, and devoted himself to work, faith, and family. When Owens lived with them, there were strict rules, early wake-ups, big expectations.

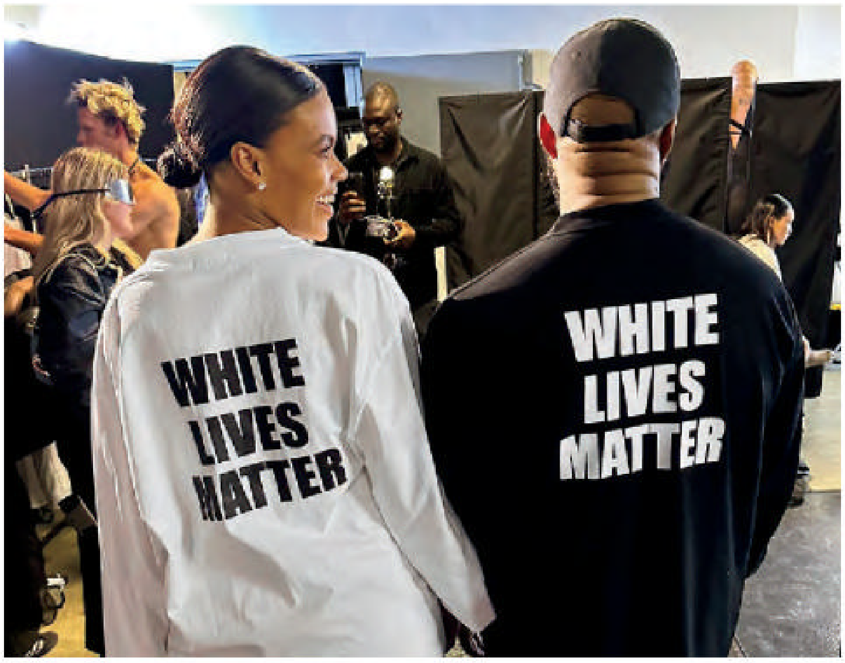
In school, Owens excelled. In elementary school she joined a program for high achievers. All of the other kids were white. She would get shoved, or teased for not knowing the lyrics to rap songs in the cafeteria. She felt her good grades and rule following were seen as a racial "betrayal." "The idea that black children who perform well in school are somehow 'acting white' is in and of itself a racist assessment…. It fosters a culture where brighter black students must decide between wanting to be accepted by their race, or performing well in their studies." (Owens lowercases *black* in her book; it is *Vanity Fair*'s style to uppercase.)

In high school, Owens partied and dated and studied. She joined the cheerleading squad and track team, volunteered for Big Brothers Big Sisters, and performed in a poetry slam. She remembers sitting in her bedroom asking God why her family didn't have more money, being angry for being dealt the wrong hand. "I had to have lived through certain things to inform my perspectives," she told me. "Because you're not given more than you can handle, believe it or not."

She was a regular teenager, until she wasn't. In the fall of 2005, according to old news reports, when Owens was in her junior year, she was attacked by three white girls. Per the reports, one of them left a voicemail on her phone, calling her a racial epithet and telling her that she "probably had a disease" because she was Black. Soon after in the school hallway, one of them accused her of having sex with one of their boyfriends and threatened a fight with Owens at cheerleading practice after school. That evening, the girls showed up at a local Blockbuster, where Owens was working at the time. When she saw that the girls who had threatened her earlier were outside waiting for her, she tried to run back inside, but they'd blocked the door. The store manager happened to look out the window at that point. He told police that when he ran outside to help her, Owens was lying on her stomach as the three girls beat her and shouted a racial epithet. One girl ripped out Owens's earring. The confrontation was caught on a security camera. The girls were charged with second-degree breach of peace, second-degree unlawful restraint, conspiracy to commit breach of peace, and

THE KKK, OR WHITE SUPREMACY" *sent her into the like Jesse Watters and Alex Jones.*

PREVIOUS SPREAD: MARK PETERSON/REDUX.



THIRD RAIL
Above: Owens and rapper Kanye West wearing "White Lives Matter" shirts at the Yeezy Paris Fashion Week show last year. Opposite: Owens with her husband, George Farmer—the CEO of Parler, a social media platform for conservatives—in 2019.

conspiracy to commit unlawful restraint and intimidation by bigotry or bias. They were tried as minors, meaning the hearings were closed to the public. The attorney for one chalked the whole thing up to boyfriend issues, not bigotry.

A little more than a year later, Owens was again singled out. Unlike the first incident, this one she wrote about in her book: She was curled up on a couch at her then boyfriend's house one evening when a string of calls came through. She let them go to voicemail. It had been a rough week. She'd gotten in a shouting match with one of her friends, a guy who she says was jealous of her boyfriend. The fight resulted in the young man getting suspended from school. He and four others, including a son of then Stamford mayor Dannel Malloy (later governor of Connecticut), prank called Owens. In the messages, people called Owens a racial epithet. "I'm gonna kill you, you know? Just because you're fucking poor. And you're black. Okay?" one message said. "You better not be fucking there, 'cus you might get a bullet in the back on your head. You big whore. You fucking whore... Martin Luther King had a dream. Look at that [N-word], he's dead. That [N-word] is dead! Harriet Tubman—that [N-word]? She's dead too! Rosa Parks, that fucking [N-word], she's dead!"

Owens could identify at least one of the voices on the messages; others would take FBI agents weeks to try to decipher. "It is difficult to land upon the correct adjectives to convey exactly what I felt when the messages had concluded, except to say that my reaction was physical," she wrote in her book. "It was like having the wind knocked out of my chest—an unexpected force stealing my oxygen immediately...I ache for high school Candace, alone and crying, unaware of what the next morning would bring."

Once the mayor's son was identified, local media descended. The story was splashed across the front page of every local newspaper and at the top of nightly news broadcasts, Owens's image flashed again and again. Everyone picked a side, she wrote, and many people thought she was lying.

The NAACP called for every boy on the tape to be arrested. After some of the callers were arrested (records are sealed), Owens returned to school with two security guards. On his daughter's behalf, Owens's father filed a federal lawsuit against the Stamford Board of Education and the case was settled for $37,500. (His counsel? Norm Pattis, Alex Jones's lawyer who inadvertently put incriminating documents in the hands of opposing counsel.) "I was labeled, officially, as the victim," Owens wrote.

With years of distance, her perspective has shifted. She told me that her friend wasn't racist; he was a hurt person trying to hurt a person. It had been the media's analysis that destroyed lives. When I told her that the friend had since changed his last name, she looked surprised.

I asked her how she squares the fact that she was the victim of heinous racial attacks and now broadcasts that there is no such thing as systemic racism. "It's not about whether or not you are a victim because I can guarantee you are. That's the easy part. But how do you get over these things? How can you use your experiences and recognize that they're not permanent? You're not locked into being a victim forever," she said. "I always come out stronger."

OWENS'S PATH TOWARD conservatism started with the pursuit of a journalism degree. But she dropped out of the University of Rhode Island her junior year—an issue with her student loans, she's said. That's when she interned at *Vogue*. In 2012, she took a job as an assistant in private equity to pay down the loans, then saved enough money to quit and practice yoga. None of her friends from back then remember her being particularly political, though everyone generally assumed she was liberal. She came up with the idea for Degree180, a female-centric blog with the tagline "A blog for millennials, by millennials (No clickbait or listicles ever. We promise)."

Owens served as both the boss and a content creator, writing dozens of exceptionally personal posts in the platform's run. She had range: four reasons why dating an older man was the best decision she ever made; why stay-at-home moms are "batshit crazy"; on faking orgasms ("I've faked it a lot, more times than I'm

She felt **MOST OF THE CRITICISM** *was coming from people who Owens says "hates my guts" after*

comfortable admitting. And by 'more times than I'm comfortable admitting,' I mean 6,214½ times"); why was everyone obsessed with anal sex? ("I'm not a backdoor banger"). She lauded West, who, at the time, she adored as a fan but definitely did not know: "Yes, I am aware this is going to come off as arrogant, I feel that I am the female Kanye West." She warned the GOP was headed for a "tea-party coffin [to be sealed] because the 'gay-transgendered-bi-straight-anything-else' conversation will be instantly over, deleted done," and she "actually [finds] it creepy that you have cared so much and for so long about somebody else's sex life"; and that reproductive organs and issues will no longer be a topic of presidential debate: "It was recently confirmed that the republicans are actually stuck in the 1950's, and the leading scientists of the world are doing everything in their power to correct the time warp, but like, COME ON!!" The only semblance between Owens then and Owens now seems to be her sense of conviction. According to one person who worked with her back then, "It was working at the time, and it was clear she was going somewhere with it."

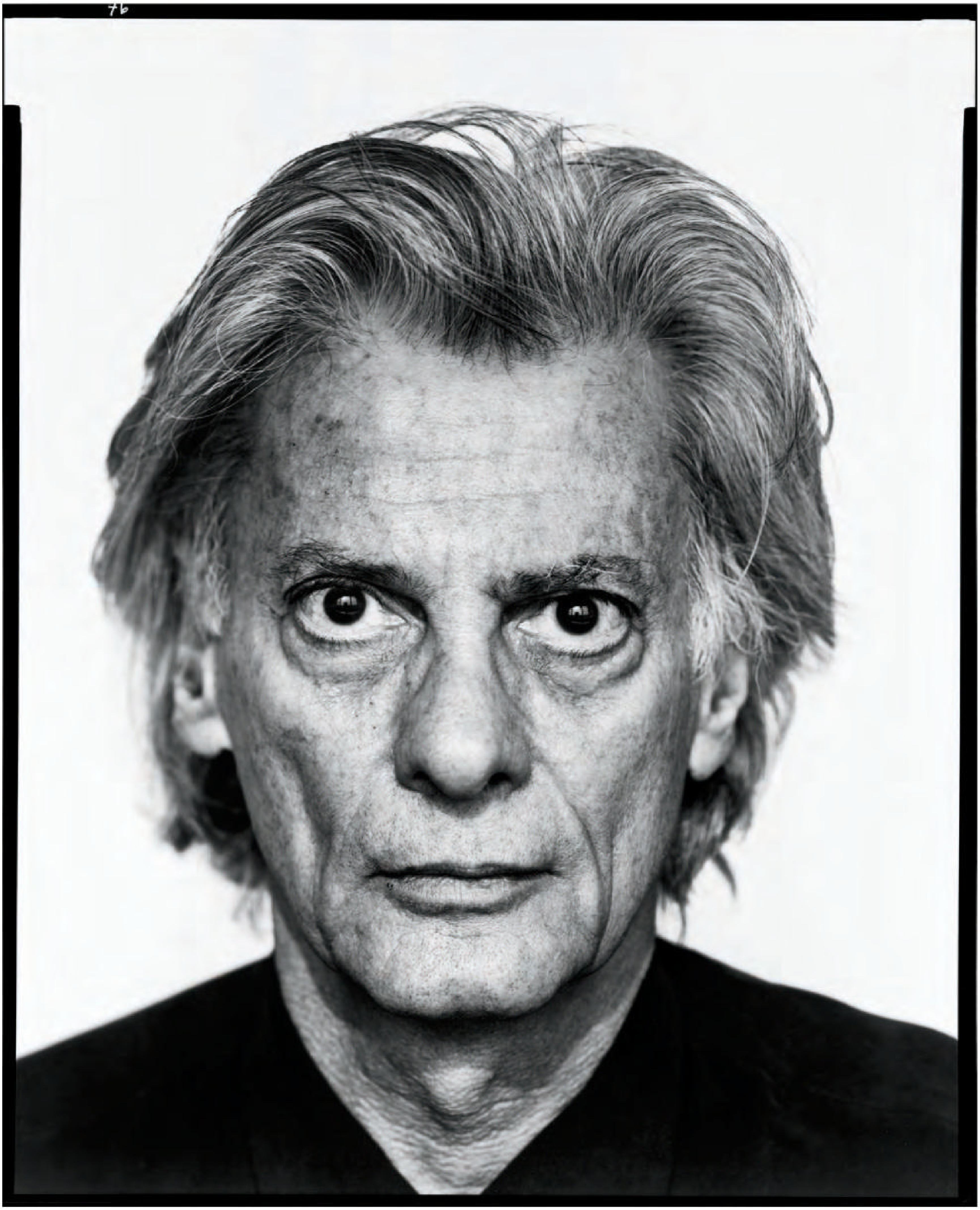
In the spring of 2016, the women of Degree180 had a new idea. They launched a $75,000 Kickstarter campaign for a website called Social Autopsy. The idea was to let social media users take screenshots of posts that they found offensive or harmful and put them into a database that users could search by name. "Wave goodbye to cyberbullies and trolls," announced a Social Autopsy video in which Owens said that her team had compiled thousands of profiles. Immediately, the idea was derided as a breeding ground for doxing—the internet term for posting someone's identifying information online, which tends to lead to harassment both on the internet and in real life. Owens, at the time, had never even heard of doxing. The day that the Kickstarter went live, Zöe Quinn, a key target of the sexist internet hate campaign Gamergate, called Owens to ask her to shut down Social Autopsy. At the same time, trolls began to dox Owens, posting her address and identifying her family members, and sending her threatening, racist emails and texts. With little more than a hunch, Owens erroneously accused Quinn of being behind the hate campaign. Jesse Singal, in a story about the debacle for *New York* magazine, painted Owens as a naive, conspiracy-minded young person who didn't understand the internet. The only news outlet CONTINUED ON PAGE 104

with **AN AXE TO GRIND**—*Meghan McCain, for one, they feuded over COVID vaccines.*

MARK HARRISON/CAMERA PRESS/REDUX. OPPOSITE: @REALCANDACEO/TWITTER.

On the occasion of his centennial, friends and subjects of the legendary photographer share their memories—and memorable portraits—in a new exhibition and book

The AVEDON *Century*



1993

Richard AVEDON

"Of all his portraits and self-portraits, this is the most authentic," says former colleague Kara Glynn. "Dick always invited his subjects into his world and then proceeded to capture their essence, the truth or his truth—or as he used to say (in jest), 'Steal their soul.' Dick invites us into his world in this photograph. Literally. I love this image for its truth."

1972

Anjelica HUSTON

"I was furious when Dick told me he had decided to publish this portrait—I thought it desperately unflattering! Now, of course, I see it for what it is—intimate and unapologetic—pure Avedon."

2002

Tom FORD

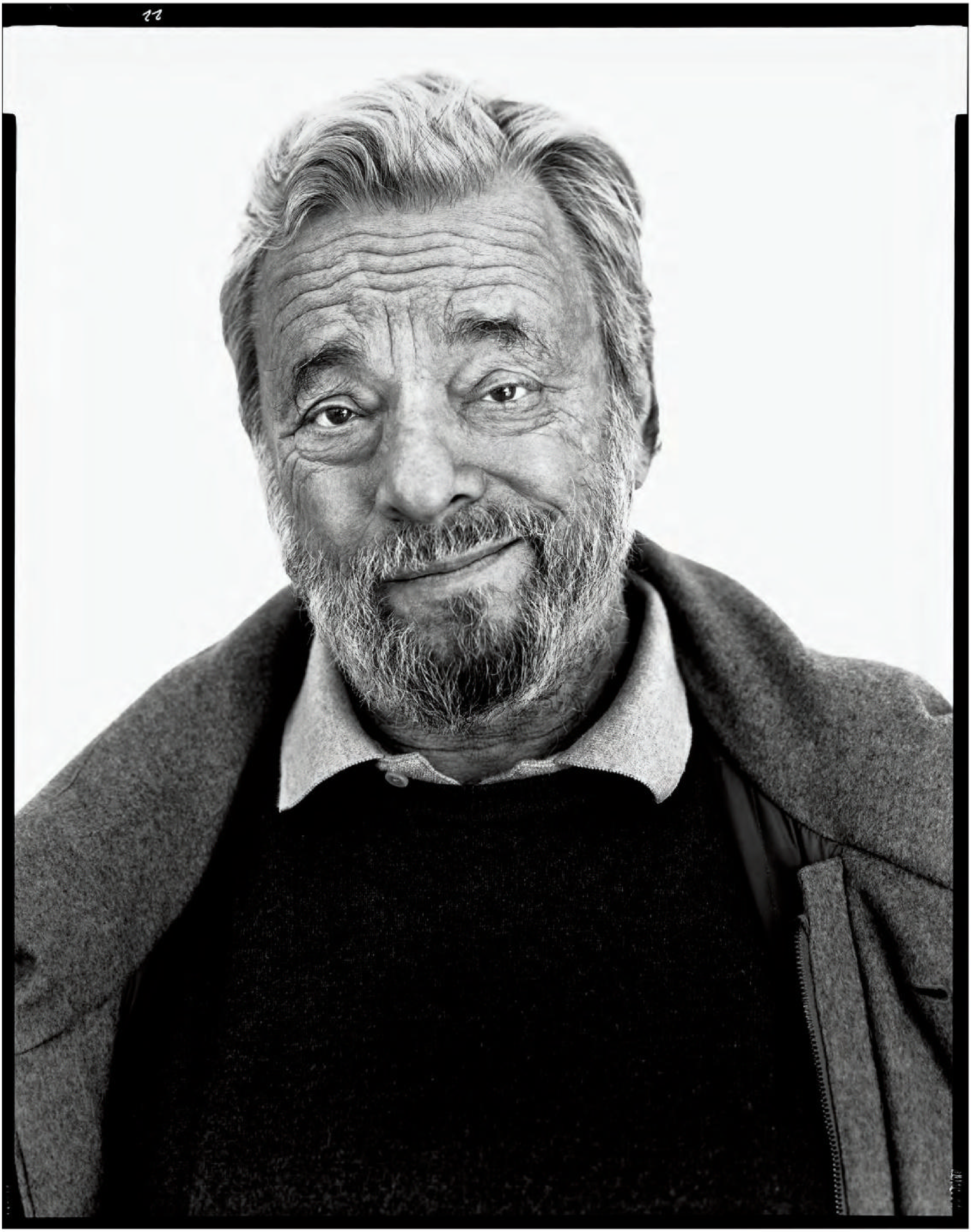
"I was photographed by Irving Penn that morning and then Avedon in the afternoon. The photographic styles of the two could not have been more different. Penn looked and looked at every angle of my face and tried to make me feel uncomfortable so that in the end he would capture something that I would not normally present to the world.... Avedon, on the other hand, wanted me to feel absolutely comfortable."

1955

Marian ANDERSON

"Each and every time I see this photo, it moves me," says *Harper's Bazaar* editor in chief Samira Nasr. "Avedon was masterful because he could also seemingly effortlessly capture honesty and emotion. In 1955, the same year this photo was taken, Marian Anderson became the first Black opera singer to perform a lead role at New York's Metropolitan Opera. This photo captures beauty, emotion, and the possibilities that come with freedom."

Portraits and text adapted and excerpted from *Avedon 100,* to be published May 4 by Gagosian and distributed by Rizzoli. Copyright © 2023.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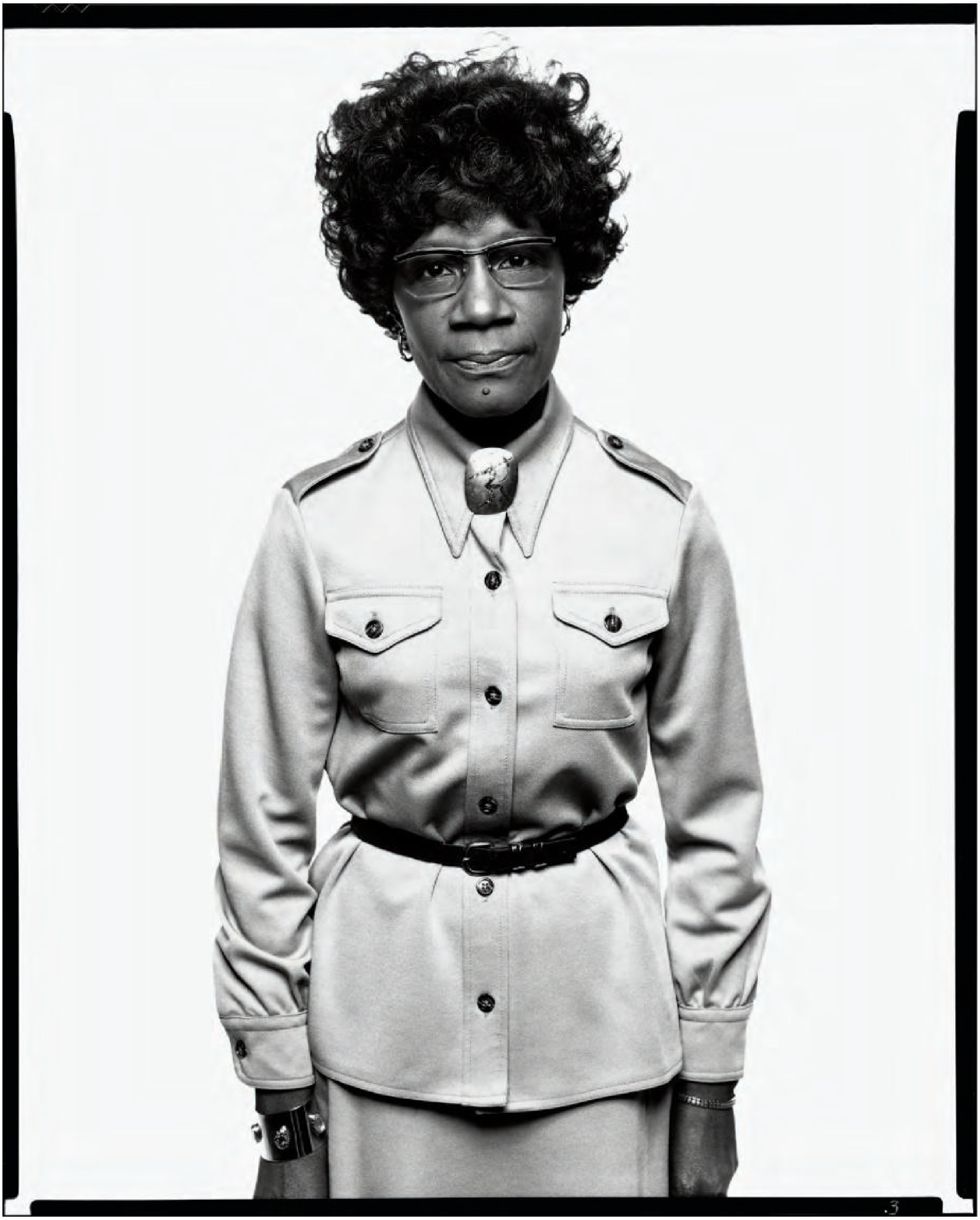


2004

Stephen SONDHEIM

In this portrait, says musician Mark Ronson, "he's 74 and unquestionably the greatest living American composer...with a 'Whaddayouwanna take this guy's picture for?' look about him. It appears he might not have wanted to stay long enough to take his coat off, but he's obviously there out of his reverence for the photographer."

1976

Shirley CHISHOLM

"The first Black woman elected to Congress, and the first Black candidate to run for a major party's nomination for president, [she] campaigned as the unbought and unbossed 'Fighting Shirley Chisholm,' which is exactly how Avedon photographed her," says Thelma Golden, director and chief curator of the Studio Museum in Harlem.

© THE RICHARD AVEDON FOUNDATION.

PARAD

THE SOURCE
Fiji's waves, particularly Cloudbreak near Malolo, have made it a destination for surfers from all over the planet.

ISE LOST

ONCE A PACIFIC EDEN, FIJI HAS BECOME A DESTINATION FOR A HIGHLY COMBUSTIBLE MIX OF SURF BUMS, MEGA-YACHT OWNERS, DEEP-POCKETED INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPERS, AND AT LEAST ONE SCIENTIST WHO THINKS HE CAN ENGINEER THE PERFECT WAVE

By **DAVID KUSHNER**

I.

THE SURFERS AND THE BOATMAN

Five years ago, Ratu "Jona" Joseva, a 32-year-old Indigenous Fijian boat taximan, and two Aussie lifelong surfing bros, Navrin Fox and Woody Jack, bought an overgrown five-acre patch of coastline on Malolo, among the most popular of Fiji's more than 330 islands. With its crescent beaches, Seussian palms, and proximity to the international airport, the roadless three-mile-long island has become a post-lockdown playground for billionaire yachties and privacy-seeking celebs. During my visit last July as Joseva and I puttered along the coast in his small fishing boat, we were lost in the shadow of a Millennium Falcon–size $45 million superyacht.

But Malolo also attracts another crowd: surfers like Fox and Jack who come to ride *the wave*—the one Kelly Slater has called his favorite—Cloudbreak. After Fox and Jack met Joseva on his boat taxi on a surf trip around 2014, the three men decided to go in on a sliver of undeveloped land, the rights of which were controlled by Joseva's village. They secured a 99-year lease for $50,000. While the rest of the island was going high-end, they imagined building four little eco-friendly bures for their families and friends.

Jack, a laid-back 42-year-old with long curly blond hair stuffed under his red baseball cap and maritime tattoos on his arms, is a surfboard shaper in Yamba, Australia. He saw the Fiji property as his home away from home. "We wanted our kids to grow up here," he says.

As Joseva steers us onto the shore, his dogs leap from the boat looking for mullet. They come up empty. "No fish," Joseva explains. That's because there's no coral either, and without it, the ecosystem crumbles. What was once a pristine coastal reef is now a graveyard. A 25-foot-deep channel cuts a 100-foot path through to the beach, where a large graffitied barge spills with rusting junk. Nearby, a gate runs through the center of their leased land, with deserted security booths on either side. A sloppily painted sign hangs from a post with a misspelled warning: "No Trespas."

The *Walking Dead* vibes only worsen along the zombie reef's trail. Dozens of giant rusting construction trucks, their windows blown out by cyclones, line the road, leeching fluid into what's left of the mangroves. Corroding steel girders and pipes litter the brush. Stacks of lumber rot into a stream turned toxic green. It's like this for more than a mile of coastline, marked by warning signs in Chinese. At the end, there's a small, fading strip of signs illustrating what this site was to be: a 61-acre tropical wonderland of 370 thatch-roofed bures, sparkling pools, and beachfront bungalows. It was going to be the largest resort in Fiji and the island nation's first casino, and its name was Freesoul.

In 2018, Fox, Jack, and Joseva discovered that the mysterious builders behind the project had illegally seized their land and were willing to resort to violence to defend it. Five years later, their battle has become a full-on war for the heart of paradise that's as bizarre as Fiji is beautiful, a parable of powerful international developers, pearl farmers, Silicon Valley billionaires, and a surfer-scientist who promises that he can solve coastal degradation *and* provide rideable breaks.

At the center of it all are the locals fighting not only for their own environment, but for the future of a planet already underwater.

II.

THE LAND

"Bula!" A dozen village elders and chiefs clap as they exclaim the Fijian greeting, "welcome." The men, among the hereditary leaders of the nation's 70 major clans, wear their formal short-sleeve, button-up tropical shirts and dark sulus. They're gathered for a *talanoa,* a traditional forum of dialogue among the Pacific people for airing concerns and resolving conflicts.

It's midmorning in July 2022, and we're in a large blue pearl-farming shack, built on stilts over a still, sparkling bay of Taveuni. Lush, volcanic, and remote, Taveuni is famous for its robust reefs, kaleidoscopic corals, and bountiful marine life. It's the fear of losing their environment to destructive developers that has brought the villagers together. Because, as they learned, one of the consultants on the Freesoul project now had designs to take over their reef too. "Our marine reserve to us is our life, it's our heartbeat, the heartbeat of every person," says Joseph Stolz, the 63-year-old Fijian spokesperson for the chiefs. "You don't come to me and say, 'I will stop your heartbeat.' I'll kill you first before you stop me," he says, "that is how dangerous the issue is."

The battle of the Freesoul development starts with the Indigenous Fijians. They comprise about half of the million people who populate the country. Most of the rest are the descendants of the Indian laborers who served the former British colonial rulers. The Indigenous locals like Joseva live off the land in poor coastal villages—growing kava roots, hunting for pigs, fishing for wahoo. This turned crucial during the first years of the coronavirus; it shuttered the nation's more than $1 billion tourism industry, which accounts for 40 percent of the $4.3 billion Fijian GDP.

"During COVID time," Stolz says, "everybody goes to the sea. Those who haven't fished before, *they* go to the sea. They realize how important living off the land is."

In Malolo, Joseva's family has been living off the land and waters for about seven generations, farming and fishing near Solevu, their rustic village of 800 people on the eastern coast. "On the island they were self-sufficient," he says; "they catch their own, they grow their own." Joseva was a precocious outlier, an ambitious young guy who wanted to start a business of his own: shuttling surfers from the resorts to the waves. That's when he picked up the two riders who would become his allies in the biggest fight of his life, Fox and Jack.

Fox, a 48-year-old father of two, is a former pro surfer now making his living shaping his own signature boards in Australia. He and Jack had surfed

GETTY IMAGES. PREVIOUS SPREAD: TOM SERVAIS.

"I DON'T CARE HOW SMART YOU THINK YOU ARE. YOU DON'T GO RIPPING UP A PRISTINE REEF."

the best spots in the world. But one of their favorites was in Malolo, one of the most welcoming and picturesque places they'd ever been. "I fell in love with Cloudbreak, it's a beautiful wave," Fox tells me one day over curry stew at the Funky Fish, a surfer camp a half mile up the coast from his property. "But I really fell in love with Fiji," he continues, "that made me feel really connected with the place, the people."

Fox and Jack became fast friends with Joseva, crashing at his house in Solevu and making their daily surf at Cloudbreak. Fox and Jack even convinced Joseva to give surfing a go. "The leg rope came off, then I was struggling," Joseva tells me with a smile. "So as soon as I get on the boat, I say, 'This is my last wave.' "

With wives and kids back home, Jack and Fox had long fantasized of buying a plot of their own. Joseva knew just the place, as he told them in 2015. It was just around the coast from Solevu and a 15-minute ride to Cloudbreak. Plus, it was easily accessible at high tide through a natural opening in the mangroves, which meant they could come and go without impacting the coastal protection that the trees provide. "You can't touch the mangroves in Fiji," Fox says, "we understand that and we respect that."

In Fiji, around 90 percent of the land is owned by Indigenous groups called Mataqali; the rest is freehold or state-controlled. To secure the rights to their beachfront property, Fox, Jack, and Joseva had to negotiate a standard 99-year lease. This required two things: months of negotiations with local clans and a strong stomach for kava—a root brew that's long been used as a ceremonial drink by Pacific Island peoples.

"Kava always the champion," Joseva says in a deadpan. "Nobody can beat kava."

In 2017, after two years and many kava bowls, the three had their $50,000 deal and their land. But they hadn't begun work on their bures before Joseva got a surprising call from some villagers nearby. "There's some people tenting at your land," he recalls being told by a local.

When Joseva investigated, he found the canopied beach was now a makeshift tent city of laborers. Giant excavators clawed into the reef, digging up coral to make a massive channel. After flying out with Jack to meet Joseva and see the damage, Fox was sickened as he watched the industrial fluid spill into the marina. Guards manned their security booths at the gate. Workers dumped scrap metal into a barge by the channel. "There was toilet paper everywhere," Joseva recalls. The workers had been shitting in the mangroves where local women fished for crabs.

To see this kind of environmental destruction firsthand felt like a gut punch. "It just went against all of our beliefs," Fox says, "just about climate change and looking after the world, and our future for our kids and your kids. It just was like 'Oh my, is this really happening?' "

The trio spotted a severe, well-dressed man whom the workers called the boss. His name was Dickson Peng. He ran a mobile phone store in Suva, Fiji's capital city. Now he claimed to be representing the Freesoul site's elusive developer. "Hey, mate, we're your neighbors," Fox recalls telling him, trying to remain diplomatic. "We are going to have to get along here, like can we talk about what you guys are doing and what you're proposing to do?"

Peng, Fox said, just coldly stared through him. Then he spit at Fox's feet. "We're taking your land," Fox recalled him saying. "Fuck you." (Peng and Freesoul did not return requests for comment.)

In Fiji, the government requires any builder to complete and pass an environmental impact assessment, or EIA, before breaking ground. This applies, as described by the country's Environment Management Act, to "any activity or undertaking likely to alter the physical nature of the land in any way." The people behind Freesoul were clearly in violation on numerous grounds. As Fox, Jack, and Joseva watched Peng head off through the fallen mangroves with his crew, they believed that the destruction was in the design. But whose design was it?

III.

DR. WAVE, PHD

"This is all completely artificial," Shaw Mead tells me proudly as we walk the white crescent beach of a sparkling turquoise bay. "Where we're standing was mud flats."

It's a searing blue morning a mile up the coast on Malolo, as I speak to Mead, a 56-year-old New Zealander with a PhD in coastal oceanography who has become the go-to marine consultant for high-end resorts in Fiji and around the world. Nicknamed "the surfer scientist," he looks and lives the part, with his sun-kissed Spicoli hair, his tribal tattoos and lifelong passion for surfing. One afternoon over lunch, he shows me a photo on his iPhone of his head sliced open after a board speared it.

His company, eCoast, promotes what Mead describes as his "holistic approach to coastal and estuarine management."

GETTY IMAGES

We’re on Malolo in Vunabaka, a $124 million luxury development of residential homes, a private marina, and the five-star Six Senses resort, where he transformed the murky bay of dying fish into the Instagram-ready shores he had shown me. Among his first clients in Fiji was Mel Gibson, who in 2006 hired him to assess the wetlands on his private island, Mago, which he had bought for a reported $15 million. (“He was doing the right thing,” Mead says of Gibson.) A couple weeks after we meet, he emails me from Moskito, Richard Branson’s billionaire playground in the British Virgin Islands, where he’s mitigating beach erosion. The staff, he marvels, gets free booze 24/7. “Sir Richard just wants everybody to be happy,” he writes.

Mead grew up another Kiwi kid angling for waves in the scrappy surf town of Beach Haven. “My whole face used to peel off every Sunday from the sunburn,” he wistfully recalls. “We were all chasing the perfect wave.” Few chased it further than Mead, who eventually studied for a doctorate in coastal processes and surf research. When his university mentor, Dr. Kerry Black, left to start a company designing artificial reefs, Mead eventually followed. Their downright radical ambition was to work on projects that created a sort of virtuous circle, not just to protect vulnerable coastlines but to create surfable waves in the process. “Rather than just building seawalls and tipping rocks on the coast to stop erosion,” Mead says, “move those structures offshore, put them underwater, and then you can actually incorporate surfing breaks in them as well.”

In practice things have proven more difficult. Mead’s early projects in locales including England and India left problems in their wake. The sand-filled geo-containers used to create the artificial surfs buckled under the pressures of the ocean, ripping open and leaving behind the materials to wash ashore. For Mead, however, such things happen on the way to progress. “Some bags started to fail,” he says.

Mead has become a polarizing figure for his work. “I’ve learned how nasty some people can get,” he says. “They made me out like I’m Dr. Evil, going around the world ripping off loads of money. But a lot of the work I’ve done for the reef stuff has been pro bono because I believe in it.”

Mead is known around Fiji for his environmental work, and the rustic hotel, the Maqai Beach Eco Surf Resort, he owns in Taveuni. Around 2017, he was approached by a Suva planning company who wanted him to consult on a resort project in Malolo.

The group, Freesoul Real Estate Development, had struck a deal in 2017 with local clans to build their resort on the island. As an investigation by Newsroom, a New Zealand news site, would later confirm, the company had deep roots in China. With Peng as its executive director, Freesoul had launched in Fiji in 2002 as a telecom business and had been developing some of the 6,000 acres it owned across the land. Newsroom found that in 2017, the company expanded into tourism by partnering with the Shanghai Media Group, which runs radio and television stations throughout China. The resort would be part of China’s larger “Belt and Road” global development strategy, meant to expand its influence abroad. Fiji’s prime minister was the sole South Pacific nation leader at the first Belt and Road Forum in 2017.

After looking at the plan for its tropical wonderland, Mead did his usual computer modeling and analysis. He looked at the hydrodynamics of putting in the artificial reef pass, the desalinization plans. In April 2018, he coauthored a report called “Coastal Processes Assessment for Malolo Island Resort,” which, on his CV, he cites as “Prepared for Freesoul Real Estate.” Among other things, he recommended the most sustainable materials for the overwater bures, which would float off just “a small boardwalk through the middle” of the mangroves.

Mead makes a point to say that while he comes up with the environmental designs, he has no control over whether or how his clients implement them. But, he says, the builders at Freesoul followed his plan perfectly. “They weren’t mowing down mangroves,” he insists. “They were doing the right things. They were following the rules.” He pauses to correct himself. “They were following the *advice,* sorry,” he continues, “not the rules.”

IV.

THE PRIME MINISTER

In September 2018 in Bangkok, Fiji prime minister Josaia Voreqe “Frank” Bainimarama gave the opening remarks at a UN Climate Change Conference.

Bainimarama was a controversial and authoritarian leader. After instigating a coup in 2006, the former commander of the Fijian military installed himself in power the next year. Soon after, he implemented a so-called Media Industry Development Decree, which subjected journalists to fines, intimidation, and imprisonment for acting critically of his regime. (In May 2022, the global press freedom watchdog Reporters Without Borders ranked Fiji as the worst place for journalists in the Pacific.)

This wasn’t the only scandal embroiling Bainimarama in 2018. Weeks earlier, the leader of a South Korean doomsday cult was arrested for holding 400 followers captive in Fiji. Shin Ok-ju, founder of the Grace Road Church, had led them to the country in 2014 as a safe haven from a prophesied famine, but escapees told of violent beatings and bizarre rituals. Grace Road allegedly maintained deep ties with the Fijian government, which had provided it with millions of dollars in business loans. An investigation by the Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project and the Korea Centre for Investigative Journalism later found “the sect now operates the country’s largest chain of restaurants, controls roughly 400 hectares of farmland, owns eight supermarkets and mini marts, and runs five Mobil petrol stations. Its businesses also provide services such as dentistry, events catering, heavy construction, and Korean beauty treatments.”

Despite the troubles at home, however, Bainimarama had fashioned himself as an environmental leader. As president of the Bangkok UN conference, he argued for the urgent implementation of the Paris Agreement. “Would any of us like to return to our people,” he told the conference, “and tell them that we had the chance to do something truly great and truly necessary for the world we will pass to our children, but we lacked the will to get it done?”

As Bainimarama spoke, the environmental calamity of the Freesoul project was playing out on Malolo. After being locked out of their beach in early 2018, Fox, Jack, and Joseva felt like they were facing an impossible fight. Freesoul wasn’t even making an offer to buy their speck of land; they were simply taking it (Fox said the group later offered them

$10,000). As the months passed, the trio came to see their struggle as indicative of the global fight for environmental justice. They began working with Kenneth Chambers, an environmental attorney and chairman of the University of the South Pacific's School of Land Management and Development in Suva. Chambers, who died in 2019, told Newsroom he took on the case because it "has raised serious questions about the Fijian government's effectiveness or enthusiasm to administer its own environmental laws."

The stringent enforcement provisions of the country's Environment Management Act, Chambers knew, require that developers first obtain environmental approval before building. Yet Freesoul was flouting the laws: illegally reclaiming beach access, dredging and smashing the reef to build a boat channel on Fox, Jack, and Joseva's beach, dumping debris from the destroyed reef on protected seagrass, destabilizing the hillsides after stripping them of vegetation, dumping raw sewage and trash into protected seaside mangroves, plowing over reefs at low tides in excavators and trucks.

In August 2018, Chambers succeeded in getting an interim injunction on Fox, Jack, and Joseva's behalf from the Fijian courts—but Freesoul kept building. The next month, the trio flew a drone over the site, filming the continued construction and environmental vandalism: the trucks and workers and dead mangroves and reefs. They sent the photos and videos to the attorney general's office. Freesoul just continued to build. How was Bainimarama and the government letting this happen, they wondered, just yards from a superyacht marina, no less?

V.

THE SHOWDOWN

To circumvent Bainimarama's restrictions on the Fijian press, Fox, Jack, and Joseva took their story to Melanie Reid, lead investigations editor for Newsroom in New Zealand. Reid's story, published on February 7, 2019, detailed the environmental damage and included devastating before and after pictures of the site. "Everyone is asking what Freesoul's secret is," Chambers told her, "how this could happen with no EIA and no foreshore lease in place. Are the institutions just too busy and under-resourced or is something more sinister going on?"

After the story appeared, the local villagers tried to rescind Freesoul's lease and stop construction. "This too is the Government's fault," Solevu village elder Jonetani Nayate told Newsroom, "because so many times they have been told they must stop work but no one has made them. Now they bring in the barges at three and four in the morning and unload all the materials while everyone is asleep."

Despite their outcries, the work continued. Fijians lined the fence with placards protesting Freesoul. A woman held a handwritten sign that read "God is our main provider/He gave us our land/sea and environment to look after but not be abused." When Fox, Jack, and Joseva returned with Reid two months later, in April 2019, a young Chinese man who represented Freesoul tried to wrestle Fox off the property.

Given the government's tacit support of Freesoul, Fox avoided a fight, even when, he says, the man wielded a rusty metal rod. An existential surfer cowboy, he steadied himself like he was facing a monster wave. "I was very aware that if I was aggressive back to that man," he says, "I would be thrown in jail pretty quickly." Reid and her crew were later arrested in Suva outside Freesoul offices by local police for trespassing and taken to jail.

Mead has a two-word descriptor for accusations that the resort builders were illegally using Fox, Jack, and Joseva's land: "fake news." Freesoul wasn't on their beach, he says, "they were right on the boundary." The builders were "already following the plan of what would have been acceptable," he tells me. As for accusations that his design amounted to environmental vandalism, he has two more words: "completely bogus."

"THEY MADE ME OUT LIKE I'M DR. EVIL, GOING AROUND THE WORLD RIPPING OFF LOADS OF MONEY."

VI.

ENTER THE TECH BROS

Mead wasn't lingering on the showdown at Freesoul. He's got an even more ambitious project on his mind when we meet one starry night in July along his artificial beach at Vunabaka. Dressed in a T-shirt, board shorts, and jandals and sipping a Corona, he CONTINUED ON PAGE 100

When Stephanie Tisone met Anthony William, the cult-famous, self-billed clairvoyant known as the Medical Medium, she felt an instant connection. Her belief in his abilities was unwavering. Her life would never be the same **BY DAN ADLER**

HEALTHY

THE SEEKER
"It actually tells you what's wrong and how to fix it," Stephanie Tisone (opposite) would tell a friend of Anthony William's work.

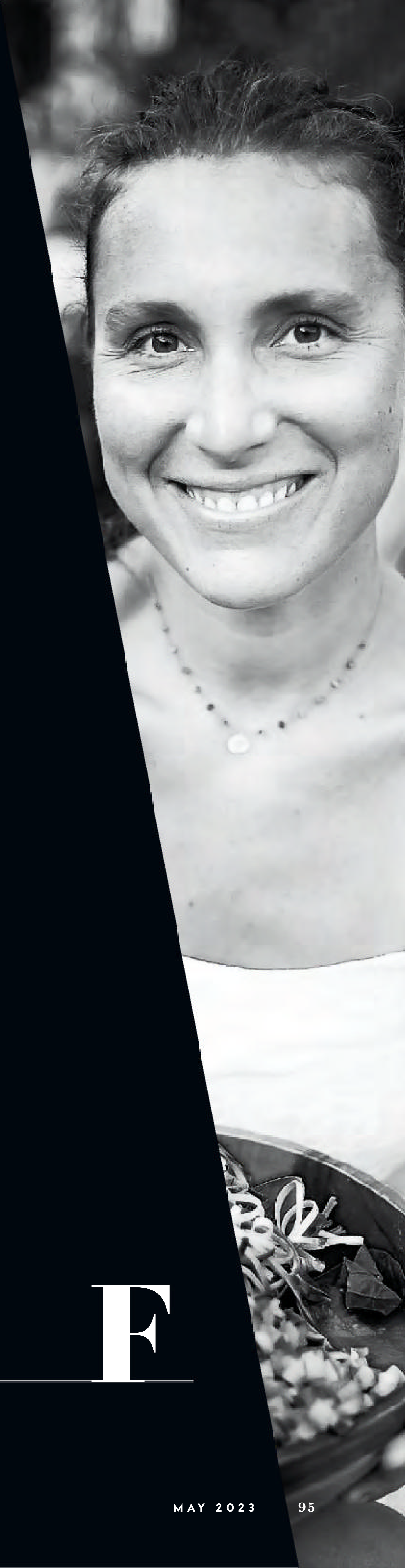
S

STEPHANIE TISONE BEGAN pursuing new answers to her health concerns in 2013. She was 33 and had already molded her life around nutrition for years, traveling from her home in Newtown, Pennsylvania, to Hawaii and Southeast Asia to meet other raw vegans. Her family has a history of cancer, and after testing positive for two gene mutations correlating to an increased risk for breast cancer, she thought reconfiguring her diet could help.

On the advice of the mother of a family for whom she had nannied, Tisone booked a consultation with Anthony William, known on social media and in his books as the Medical Medium. A 53-year-old former health food store owner from Connecticut, William claims that, at four years old, a spirit visited him and gave him the ability to scan bodies for disease by sight. During Tisone's hour-long $400 phone call with William, he said that heavy metals from vaccines caused her migraines and that the Epstein-Barr virus was hiding out in her liver. He recommended that she start a regimen of wild blueberries, spirulina, cilantro, zinc, and vitamin B_{12}, and later said that high estrogen levels fueled her headaches.

William has said that negative energy can be a source of disease and that he can teach you to clear it; that he can give followers emotional support to rewire their brains and souls after post-traumatic stress disorder from long-term illness; that he can speak to the entity he calls the "Spirit of Compassion" on their behalf. He has said that his information is decades ahead of science, that he knows if objects are hidden in the walls of old homes, and that he fell into a long coma after running past a chemical spill from an overturned truck. His former associates say that much of his follower base is made up of women dealing with chronic illness and pain.

"It actually tells you what's wrong and how to fix it," Tisone would later tell a friend. "That's why Anthony's approach is so empowering." The diagnostic call buoyed her, and she started learning



SELF

William's vernacular. "The true cause of breast cancer is the Epstein-Barr virus," he wrote in his 2017 book *Thyroid Healing.* In the coming years, Tisone and William developed a friendship, and he eventually dropped his consultation fees. She began to work for William as an occasional assistant, accompanying him on trips to visit clients and speak at events. She held out hope, she often told friends and family, that she could one day work for him full-time. (Through his counsel, William declined repeated requests to comment on the record for this story.)

William is a frantic presence on his YouTube channel and social media accounts—he has 4 million Instagram followers. An article about his work published by Gwyneth Paltrow's Goop in 2015 became the site's most read story that year. With his hair tied in its regular short ponytail, William showed up in a YouTube video with Novak Djokovic's wife, Jelena; on a 2019 episode of *Keeping Up With the Kardashians,* waving his hands over Kim Kardashian and Kanye West; in a podcast interview with Kate Hudson. He traveled to Los Angeles to make nighttime house calls for patrons. In 2019, publications including this magazine traced surging demand for celery juice among the wealthy and health-conscious to one of his signature recommendations.

To some degree, William has drawn from folk tradition in his work. He has compared himself to Edgar Cayce, who claimed to be clairvoyant and became known as a founding father of New Age. William's ascent has also coincided with the boom the wellness industry has undergone in the last decade as an ever-growing swath of consumers explores ideas like raw diets and detoxes. It's been a boon to a now common brand of social media entrepreneur. For many followers, William has functioned as an amusement or a supplemental health source. To a certain percentage of true believers, though, the Medical Medium serves as community and identity.

As William gained more exposure, experts began to warn against his pseudoscience. "Promoting the Medical Medium is no different than promoting anti-vaccine views or cleanses or coffee enemas," Jennifer Gunter, a San Francisco ob-gyn and leading Goop critic, told the online magazine Inverse in 2018. "The minimum is that people waste money, but there is great potential for harm with many of the therapies that are recommended and delays in diagnosis." William often folds his defense against such critiques into his pitch. "I noticed that there's this desperate, desperate need to take down the Medical Medium out there," he recently said in an online chat group.

Like other alternative health practitioners, William's site includes standard disclaimer language: "Anthony William… is not a licensed medical doctor, chiropractor, osteopathic physician, naturopathic doctor, nutritionist, pharmacist, psychologist, psychotherapist, or other formally licensed healthcare professional, practitioner or provider of any kind. Anthony William, Medical Medium does not render medical, psychological, or other professional advice or treatment, nor does it provide or prescribe any medical diagnosis, treatment, medication, or remedy."

Tisone's belief in William never wavered. She was, according to her friends and family, a 30-something woman with a high emotional quotient, a lifelong student with a tendency to commit herself totally to various diet protocols or gurus. Where other of William's millions of followers might treat his dictates as larks or view them as part of the vast online orbit of self-billed health experts, Tisone found herself transfixed. "Stephanie related to Anthony as he said he was," says a friend. "Just under God." Through her association with William, Tisone spent time at the homes of Robert De Niro and Demi Moore, where he would advise them to buy thousands of dollars in supplements. (Representatives for both actors declined to comment.)

Between 2014 and 2017, according to a record of Tisone's text and voice messages obtained from her brother, Tisone and William kept in regular communication that was as steady as it was wide-ranging. They analyzed her health and his career progress; she asked him about the circumstances of actor Brittany Murphy's death, and how to handle debt. Tisone also frequently texted with William's wife, Rachel Schutzman, and several Medical Medium associates about various ailments and her understanding of William's advice.

BEFORE WILLIAM STARTED his current business, he and Schutzman ran a health food store in the roughly 2,000-person town of Machias, Maine. According to a 2001 report in local newspaper *The Lubec Light,* the shop marked the couple's first retail venture since William began his career in natural healing in 1985. William eventually moved to Florida, where a Naples yoga studio advertised $12 medical intuitive readings with him. He began phone consultations as the Medical Medium in the early 2010s and saw his profile begin to rise. He performed a reading for Moore in 2014 and got a major break when the leading New Age publisher Hay House released *Medical Medium: Secrets Behind Chronic and Mystery Illness* the following year.

Prefame Medical Medium clients remember William spending extra time on the phone with them consulting and gossiping about raw food gurus. "He talks in this sweet voice," says one. As a published author, that availability shifted. "Books give credibility," Janis Donnaud, a New York literary agent for health and cooking authors, says. "Something different than selling people supplements." In 2016, William established an informal franchise

William **SHOWED UP** in a YouTube video with Novak Djokovic's wife, Jelena; on a 2019 episode of *Keeping Up With the Kardashians,* waving his hands over **KIM KARDASHIAN AND KANYE WEST**; in a podcast interview with Kate Hudson.

COURTESY OF TONY TISONE. PREVIOUS SPREAD: LEON BENNETT/GETTY IMAGES.

system of health practitioners. These affiliates didn't pay William but were steeped in his thinking and spread the word.

By then, William's and Tisone's social circles overlapped. She had become close with Phil McCluskey, a public speaker and author known in the raw food world for his 200-pound weight loss. At the beginning of 2015, McCluskey and his wife, Casey, an Australian former raw food coach and especially dedicated Medical Medium student, began helping William. The McCluskeys own a supplement company in Florida named Vimergy that William often recommends. (Phil and Casey have described themselves as the Medical Medium's director of operations and director of content and education, but both say they have never worked for William.) As William prepared his book debut, Tisone asked Phil McCluskey for help getting more work with William. He told Tisone they couldn't because the team had increased its Facebook ad spend to push William's book. (McCluskey says he had checked with William's team and was relaying this news on its behalf.)

The Medical Medium became a polished brand with textbook-style offerings. Even by the volatile standards of the health personality business, William's full-fledged emergence looked sudden. "It just seemed to be there one day," Donnaud says. "He has been working on this for a really long time," the early client says, "and he has been trying to find fame and fortune."

William began holding live events. One of his followers flew to attend the first one at the Sheraton Sand Key Hotel in Clearwater, Florida, in February 2016. She had been blowing through her savings trying to alleviate years of illness and had her first phone call with William the following week. "Thousands of people were waiting to talk to him," she remembers, "and here I was." She thought she'd never speak with him again, but he texted her a few days later. "I couldn't believe he was reaching out to me on a personal level," she says. "This was the greatest thing that ever happened to me." William eventually named the client as a practitioner on his referral page. That November, with De Niro and his family in the audience and Tisone volunteering at the event, she gave a testimonial to William onstage at Loews Hollywood Hotel.

William became Hay House's most successful author. He bought two new homes. Other self-styled medical intuitives flocked to him. Without William's recognition, the follower turned practitioner says, "You're just anyone else." (William prefaced his online referral list with another disclaimer: "The names and associated links are provided for informational purposes only and are not intended to state or imply that Anthony William or Anthony William, Inc. recommends, endorses, supports, sponsors, or is in any way affiliated or associated with any person or entity listed below, or any linked website or content.")

A vocal base of Medical Medium enthusiasts coalesced on Facebook and Reddit. They'd dissect William's diet recommendations and share their own experiences. "We're all a family at Medical Medium, and it's the safest place," he has said. "The family that's been through hell and back. It's the forgotten souls, I call 'em. It's the people who have been swept under the carpet, who've been sick, and they've been through so much, and there's no answers out there." On camera, he wraps his eccentricities in a smiling benevolence. "I know everything about coconuts," he once said. "I know it's a bold statement, but it's the truth."

William's closest acolytes maintained his mystique. "You're not allowed to talk about your own level of connection with him," the practitioner says, "so it's hard to know about someone else's." In a 2015 text, he told Tisone, "No one cares about the truth!! Do you think that vaccines are the only screwup???" Shortly after publishing his first book, he told her to "write a review dude and retaliate the evil review someone just put up" on Amazon. "Maybe throw a comment telling person how wrong and they obviously didn't read it."

"You're **NOT ALLOWED** to talk about your own level of connection with him," a practitioner says, "so **IT'S HARD TO KNOW** about someone else's."

TISONE WAS 20 years old when she absorbed her first health book—by Suzanne Somers, the sitcom actor. It was 2000. The social media–enabled wellness boom was still years off, but long-thriving subcultures tied to New Age thought and alternative diets were spreading online. Tisone actively pursued her passions. She studied the raw food authors Douglas Graham and Don Bennett and the naturopath Robert Morse. She spent a season living in a commune with David Wolfe, a superfood enthusiast and conspiracy theorist.

By her 30s, Tisone liked to joke about how she'd never been kissed. She had the word *Love* tattooed on her arm and a gentle communion with kids, which friends attribute to her enduring state of wonder. Above all, they describe her as solicitous and devoted, a connector in the raw food community. She met Sarma Melngailis at Pure Food & Wine, the aughts-era raw vegan hot spot in Manhattan that Melngailis opened before serving jail time for grand larceny and tax fraud.

Tisone met William in person for the first time in 2014, the year after her initial phone consultation, eventually landing some work with him as an ad hoc travel assistant. During their trips, she drove him around, ironed his shirts, and went on Whole Foods runs. They once got into a car accident on the way back from Moore's home in Los Angeles.

As Tisone grew closer to William, she added further restrictions to her raw diet, cutting out nuts, seeds, and avocado. For dinner, she sometimes ate two heads of romaine lettuce with cayenne and lemon. She would tell friends and family that she couldn't say too much about her work with William, but because they regularly texted, she could bring him their concerns. One family for whom Tisone nannied thought that vaccines had harmed their daughter's health and tried introducing bone broth to her diet.

"Bone broth fad is by far the most retarded of all time," William texted Tisone. "For some stupid demented reason people believe it does something for their body like the Druids did when they were sacrificing humans and making soup out of them in the dark ages of satanism."

"Thank you for confirming my gut feeling," she wrote back.

Tisone spent decades in the **ALTERNATIVE HEALTH ECOSYSTEM**, and it's difficult to get a full picture of the advice she followed. "Just want to make sure you know **I DON'T HAVE A DOC** that's overseeing all this," she texted William.

TISONE CONTINUED PURSUING work with William, and she tried to broker a Medical Medium consultation for Timothy Schmit, the longtime bassist for the Eagles, whose wife she had met through a raw food friend. Some William associates thought of Tisone as too wide-eyed, according to one, but her responsibilities afforded her an air of uncommon proximity. "There's very few that I trust in life," William texted her. "And your the most."

When William and Schutzman moved in April 2017, they gave Tisone a job preparing the house for their arrival. Despite her excitement, Tisone kept the gig quiet as best she could, telling her brother and parents not to let anyone else know. "This is super duper PRIVATE and so its really important you don't share this with anyone," Schutzman texted her.

The month prior, in March 2017, Tisone had texted Schutzman with a health development. "I'm assuming this isn't anything to be worried about and prob just detox related," she wrote. "I noticed a pretty large lump in my left breast today." Schutzman responded, "Breast lumps can be lymph or node related if you're detoxing, during your cycle, or under the weather, but you should always have it looked at by your physician, thermography scans are ok to get too if needed."

"You can give it a week or two and see if it decreases in size or swelling too," Schutzman added.

"Yes feels like detox I will do that and observe it over next week or 2," Tisone replied. "I've done thermography in past so I am familiar with that So I'll just keep an eye on it." (A thermography scan is a painless test that measures skin temperature and doesn't require radiation; the FDA and American Cancer Society have published warnings about using one as a diagnostic tool for breast cancer.)

A few days later, Tisone followed up with Schutzman. A New Jersey–based woman named Muneeza Ahmed has established herself as a leading voice in the Medical Medium community—she describes herself as the first practitioner in the world to be endorsed by William. Tisone had sought her input, and Ahmed told her that she thought it was an Epstein-Barr virus "activity packing in toxins into the cyst." ("I did the best I could to keep up with the texts Steph sent and while I cared for her and always wanted to support her as a friend," Ahmed says, "I would at times feel very overwhelmed by the sheer volume of texts and the large variety of topics she asked me about." Ahmed also says that she told Tisone to see a doctor to address her lump—but that she understood her to have "EBV from mono as a kid.")

"Updating you on Muneeza's opinion about my breast lump," Tisone texted Schutzman, telling her she'd been advised to up her intake of chaga mushroom tea and that Ahmed was sending breast health massage oil from the beauty brand Living Libations. Ahmed offered Tisone a 10 percent discount on the $30 product.

Schutzman didn't text back about Ahmed's assessment, but about two weeks later, she told Tisone, "I wanted to give you a heads up that Ant & I won't be able to answer any health related questions for the next month or so, all our energy will need to be on this move."

While Tisone was readying the house, she told a friend in a voice message, "Anthony told me that my body is transforming since I've been here, like my health and everything has gotten a lot better." When the couple got there in April, Tisone spent time with them before heading back to Pennsylvania.

Members of William's inner circle at the time understood his attention as a commodity, and Tisone's messages have a deferential tone. While Schutzman and William work closely together, in August, Tisone conveyed her awareness of a lump in her breast directly to William. "I have a quite large lump in my left breast since March, feels like I need to tell you," she wrote, adding, "No worries if you can't respond to this."

William's brushes with fame were becoming more common. He described Mark Burnett, the producer of *Survivor* and *The Apprentice,* as one of his good friends to one early client, and told her that he only texted her, Moore, and other celebrities. In October 2017, along with Deepak Chopra and Marianne Williamson, he appeared in *Heal,* a documentary about mind-body medicine directed by Kelly Noonan, who is married to private-equity billionaire Alec Gores. The following year, the couple and *Town & Country* editor in chief Stellene Volandes cohosted a book party in Los Angeles for the actor Roma Downey, who is married to Burnett. A guest recalls William sticking close by Sylvester Stallone's side as the night wore on.

The testimonials on William's site snowballed to include Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson, Diane von Furstenberg, Naomi Campbell, Alexis Bledel, James Van Der Beek, Calvin Harris, Rashida Jones, Kelly Rutherford, Lisa Rinna, Carla Gugino, Pharrell Williams, Hilary Swank, and Adam Sandler. His co-signs could range from spirited (Swank's and Sandler's representatives vouch for theirs) to something more like a framed headshot at the dry cleaners (Van Der Beek's rep says he wrote his eight years ago) to aspirational (William listed

Sophia Bush in the acknowledgments of four of his books; a rep says the actor was never a client but they once met when she accompanied a friend to the friend’s consultation).

TO THE END
Tisone’s doctor was forthright about how much time she had left; she responded by asking if someone could contact William to check.

COURTESY OF TONY TISONE.

William soon hit the peak of his own celebrity. “So your name came up from my cousin sending me screenshots of your Instagram, and then other people just sending me your name,” Kim Kardashian told him on the 2019 episode of *Keeping Up With the Kardashians.* He proceeded to tell the reality star that copper in her liver was causing outbreaks of her chronic psoriasis.

Steven Novella, a neurologist and the founding editor of the site Science-Based Medicine, sees William as part of a lineage of health-oriented operators including Cayce and Franz Mesmer, the late 18th-century physician who practiced hypnotism and befriended Mozart and Marie Antoinette. “People who are either wealthy or celebrities aren’t necessarily scientists, or even very smart, and so they become targets,” Novella says. “These kinds of people will prey upon them because they know that their endorsement is worth a lot.”

William’s nonfamous clientele also span a spectrum of belief. While there are die-hard converts such as Tisone, there are those who approach his practice with something of a wink. There are happy customers and vocal proponents as well as those who have gone all in on the Medical Medium but walked away unsatisfied. Dee Sclafani, a piano teacher in Richmond, Virginia, discovered William in 2013, the same year as Tisone, when she suddenly couldn’t make it through one of her regular runs. She soon found William online.

Sclafani initially viewed William in messianic terms and proposed to him that she make a documentary about his life. She referred friends to him, and one decided that she would book a session as long as Sclafani would join her on the call to calm her nerves. But Sclafani drifted as the cumulative consultation fees ballooned and he became scarce: “I tried these supplements and spent a ton of fucking money.”

“You’re coming from a desperation energy,” she says, “and that’s not a good energy to come from.”

“STEPHANIE RELATED to Anthony as he said he was,” says a friend. **“JUST UNDER GOD.”**

BRO I’M [NOT] doing good at all,” Tisone texted William in July 2017. “Back in excruciating pain. It’s been weeks but way worse now. Sorry to bug you.” Hours later, she wrote, “Thank you for your support. And yea think the stress you mentioned is financial stress. Praying for that to come to completion. I love you and I appreciate all you do for me.” Tisone sent photos of bumps on her skin a few days later and asked if she had shingles. William said she had “baby shingles”—“which is what the back prob was originally”—and advised her to take vitamin C and lysine.

Tisone sought out a number of other alternative health practitioners to address various subsets of her symptoms. She spoke remotely to Teshna Beaulieu, a chiropractor and a self-described specialist in quantum neurology and neuro-emotional technique; Tienko Ting, the author of *Natural Chi Movement: Accessing the World of the Miraculous;* and several Medical Medium devotees. Tisone conveyed many of the assessments she received to William.

In August, Tisone couldn’t get up. She had been sleeping on a mattress on the floor at her parents’ house and her back pain had become unmanageable. She kept the lump from her family, later texting William that she was not up front with her father because his sister had breast cancer. Tisone discussed the growth and all other manner of health issues with others, but at this moment of crisis, she went directly to William. They exchanged 156 voice messages between August 30 and September 3. They discussed several opinions Tisone had by then received and whether she would get an MRI. She did not at that time.

As her concern grew, Tisone often back-channeled to try to understand the thicket of health ideas contained in William’s messages and phone calls. “Sweetheart in your audio you said Ant didn’t know why you have nausea,” Casey McCluskey texted her. “But he does know. Maybe you didn’t hear him correctly love. Do you want me to text you the reason?” (McCluskey says that all of Tisone’s

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PARADISE LOST

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 93

explains what was to be his most radical plan for Fiji yet. He wanted to create a world-class surfing wave by “sculpting,” as he put it, a coral reef. By shaving off a portion of the seabed floor, he says, he could not only create better ocean physics for wave making but revitalize local marine life. “That area where we’ve scraped the stuff off,” he says, “everything will come back there. Within one day, you’ll see hydroids and some of the slimy type of algae. Within two years, it’ll be back to the same as it was.”

This wasn’t just one surfer nerd’s kooky dream. The World Wave Project, as Mead and his partners dubbed it, got an early vote of confidence. It received pre-seed funding from the Founders Fund, the firm colaunched by Peter Thiel, the cocreator of PayPal, early backer of Facebook, and controversial billionaire conservative donor.

Since the late 2000s, Mead and Anthony Marcotti, founder and former owner of a surf resort in Indonesia called Kandui, had been geeking out about how wave building could be a win-win for both surfers and the oceans. “It’s not about money,” Marcotti tells me. “It’s all about how cool it would be to create something like this that benefits everyone and that helps the environment.” Their friend Michael Lucas, the 50-year-old Kiwi surfer who co-owns Vunabaka resort, agreed. “We’re taking material from the area where the waves are breaking, and we’re putting it in an area where they’re not breaking,” he says. “The fish will love it!”

So, they thought, would investors. The WWP, if successful, could lead to strings of surf resorts being built in areas where none existed before. After launching an Indiegogo fundraising page detailing Mead’s scientific plan, the WWP caught the attention of the Founders Fund’s Scott Nolan, an early engineer at Elon Musk’s SpaceX and a surfer himself. Nolan saw Mead’s innovation as a novel way to use the ocean’s force to create a more efficient and ecologically sound answer to artificial wave pools. “Why don’t we just go in the ocean?” Nolan tells me. “Can we reduce the cost of making a world-class surf resource by ten to a hundred times in the ocean such that it can actually be commercial? You can actually pay for real restoration and massively net-positive habitat.”

Mead knew just the place to engineer their waves. Since 2012, he had been the owner and director of the Maqai Beach Eco Surf Resort on the small Fijian island of Qamea. Located just across the bay from the garden island of Taveuni, Maqai’s main draw was its proximity to some decent local surf. But the waves were seasonal. By shaving a portion of dead reef there, however, Mead could whip up his magic world-class waves all year. His group projected the resorts and tourism that would come up around this would bring in an estimated $30 million per year, with, as per Fijian custom, 10 percent going to the local landowners. And with the WWP planning to raise around $7 million from outside Fiji, it felt like the Wave guys were giving the locals, as Lucas puts it, “a gift.”

VII.

“OYSTER WILL DIE”

BUT, AS MEAD and his cohorts quickly discovered, it was a gift the locals didn’t desire. Fox put his concerns bluntly. “That’s an idiot talking,” Fox says. “I don’t care how smart you think you are. You don’t go ripping up a pristine reef.” By the fall of 2021, concern over Mead’s plan was spreading in the surrounding islands.

“You can never replace a reef that’s been destroyed,” one local tells me in July as we walk along the shore, the Pacific lapping at our feet. “So many people’s lives in these areas, especially in these remote areas,” they say, “are connected to the reef and the health of the reef.”

Among them is Claude Prevost, a former advertising executive from Quebec City who now operates the Civa Fiji Pearls farm near the WWP’s proposed site. A gruff, tattooed, gray-haired 55-year-old, he usually wears a black pearl choker and several more black pearls around his wrist. One afternoon, he takes me scuba diving beneath the crystal blue waters nearby to see his pearl farm 30 feet below. Deep under the surface, several rows of palm-size oysters hang from lines as pink, blue, black, and green pearls grow inside their shells. A half dozen hammerhead sharks circle below us. (Mead says the WWP “would have had no impact whatsoever” on Prevost’s pearl farm.) “I need an ecologically balanced reef that produces plankton for food for my oyster,” Prevost says. “I don’t need a dead reef around me. Oyster will die.”

In July 2022 Prevost and his supporters held their talanoa with the local villagers and chiefs to fight Mead’s plan. Rusiate “Rusi” Laladidi, who serves as the *Mata ni Tikina,* or “representative of the tribe,” represented the seven villages of the Wainikeli district. Rusi has a college degree, but, he said, most locals are poorly prepared to handle the legal and environmental complexities of local development. “We can’t do much,” he said. “I have to fight for them because most of the village, they only have primary, secondary level education.”

On the day we gathered at Prevost’s pearl farm, Stolz, the spokesperson for the chiefs, said they blamed the Fijian government at the time for allowing Mead and developers in. “Especially when our prime minister is the champion of climate change all over the world,” Stolz said angrily, “going out throughout the world and telling all the people in the world that Fiji is the forerunner in climate change issues. Yet at the same time, it’s happening right here in Fiji, allowing people to come in and destroy our resources.”

In what Mead’s group considered an act of goodwill, they offered each village a $4,500 donation before fishing rights would be negotiated. But the chiefs and villagers balked. “What would that mean for the future of this generation?” Stolz said. “You cannot repay the damage that would be done…$27,000 for the damage of our whole marine resources? I would say, in the international language: ‘Fuck off!’ ”

VIII.

EBB TIDE

BRIAN CREGAN IS an Aussie surfer who famously starred in the 1979 surf film *Band on the Run.* For 24 years, he has owned a property on Qamea near Mead’s resort and has spent countless days surfing the area. “Those WWP guys were assuming they could steamroll their way with the local Fijians and the Fijian government," he tells me. And he knew Mead had tried something similar with the Freesoul project on Malolo. So he called Fox, Jack, and Joseva.

After two years of fighting, the three friends were succeeding in finally beating back Freesoul on their shores. The assault on Fox by the Freesoul worker and the arrest of Reid and her Newsroom crew made international waves, including a story on *60 Minutes* in Australia.

On April 4, 2019, Prime Minister Bainimarama apologized to the journalists for their treatment and vowed to bring an end to Freesoul's campaign. "The conduct of Freesoul Real Estate Development has been deeply concerning to me personally for some time," he said. "As both a Fijian who treasures our environment and a global advocate for sustainable development, I share in the public's outrage. We need to send a strong message to Freesoul…and other developers looking to cause us harm, that they are not welcome to operate in Fiji."

If the Bainimarama government was concerned, of course, why didn't it take action before the journalists were arrested for asking questions? The answer, as Fox, Jack, and Joseva's attorney Ken Chambers saw it, was clear. "I believe Freesoul is part of the Chinese Belt and Road initiative," he told me before his death.

A day after Bainimarama's apology, Fiji's Department of Environment revoked the project's approval for good. In April 2021, the High Court chief justice found Freesoul guilty on two counts of undertaking unauthorized development, not guilty of one count of failing to comply with a prohibition notice, and later fined it $450,000 for causing "substantial harm to the environment" and ordered the company to post an additional $630,000 bond with the Department of Environment for rehabilitating the area.

It's the first time in Fijian history that an environmental law has been used to bring criminal charges. "The big question is whether the *Chinese* government will put its hand in its pocket" to pay Freesoul's fines, Chambers said. Bainimarama's reign of almost 16 years ended in December when he was defeated by his rival, Sitiveni Rabuka of the People's Alliance.

For Fox and the others, it feels like vindication. "We've never done anything wrong," Fox says. "We've never hurt anyone. We've never been aggressive towards anyone. We've never broken the law, and that's what we've done that's right."

And that's exactly what they advised the activists fighting the World Wave Project to do. With their success over Freesoul, in fact, the tide was turning even more swiftly against Mead and the WWP. Supporters including oceanographic explorer Jean-Michel Cousteau, son of the late ocean explorer Jacques Cousteau, joined the outcry. "My lifetime of experience and moral sense of duty compels me to strongly object to the World Wave Project's proposal to 'sculpt and modify' any reefs to enhance surf breaks," he said in a statement on behalf of his conservation group, Ocean Futures Society. "Coral reefs must be protected not destroyed!"

The Taveuni Tourism Association, an organization of 50-plus resorts in the area, agreed. It declared its opposition to the WWP, which it feared would "remove healthy coral, change the ecosystem, impact adjoining reefs, and threaten the livelihoods of tourism." A scathing takedown of the project on the surfer site Swellnet was more direct: "When the bullheaded ambition of Dr. Shaw Mead meets the fuck you money of Scott Nolan, giving up simply isn't an option."

On May 25, 2022, Mead and Lucas traveled to Naselesele Village in Taveuni to meet with the local chiefs about the project. The Fijian elders and villagers wore their formal tropical shirts. But there was no kava for their guests. When I ask Stolz how he felt when he saw Lucas and Mead, his eyes narrow. "I really want to eat their souls out," he says, "and I really want to eat their guts out."

The meeting saw eruptions of similar anger. "Where the development will take place, it's a small area and that's where we fish from," Iosefo Tikoisolomone, the traditional head of a local clan, said in Fijian, recorded by local news. "You are trying this development on our source of livelihood," he shouted. "Everyone sitting here doesn't want this development." Another man insinuated that the only reason Mead and Lucas were there at all was because the government had made no effort to stop them, any more than they had challenged Freesoul.

Lucas stood and told the crowd that if they didn't want the project, the WWP would leave—and take its money with it. "It's up to the community if they want to progress or if they don't," he tells me one afternoon over lobsters and beers at his resort, Vunabaka. "We are coming up here with an opportunity and the opportunity is yours," he goes on. "If you don't want to take it, we'll take the project elsewhere…. We thought this would help you."

The locals on Qamea ultimately declined Mead and Lucas's requests to build. Still, the WWP is unwavering; it's already planning its first wave in two undisclosed cities, Mead tells me in January, and hopes to get official approvals this year. Mead also says he has heard that Dickson Peng, Freesoul's local emissary, is back in town—and that discussions have resumed to begin work on the Malolo project. "In recent times, they're talking now about picking it up again," Mead says. Earlier this year, a Fijian court blocked Freesoul's efforts to overturn a 2019 injunction that halted work on the site—the new Fijian government backed Fox, Jack, and Joseva's objection to its lifting. In March, the same court gave Freesoul six months to pay the remaining $122,000 it owed.

WHILE MEAD'S WAVE builders seek to engineer their paradise elsewhere, Fox, Jack, and Joseva are hoping to bring theirs back. Malia Rouillon, an environmentalist they hired to survey the damage, estimates the cleanup will cost around $1 million and restore the mangroves and reef to their healthy state within three years. As of this writing, however, construction debris still litters the abandoned site. Without stabilization, Rouillon says, the marine life will never return. Fox, Jack, and Joseva (who now lives on the land in a small house and hut with his wife and four children) hope to use some of Freesoul's waste to build their own ecolodge. "That could be a good opportunity for us, which would be pretty ironic," Fox says, "to buy some of the material that's there going to waste anyway. We might as well reuse that and lessen our footprint."

In the meantime, the place is finally starting to feel more like home. It's Fox's 49th birthday and they're celebrating here. Joseva, his family, and some local villagers are barbecuing on an open fire. Jack and Fox's wife, Jacinta, are getting schooled in how to hatchet open a coconut from one of Joseva's kids. The rain forest cradles over them; Cloudbreak curls on the horizon. "Yeah," Fox says with a smile, "then we'll start our own little venture." ■

S
HEAL
THYSELF

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 99 friends knew that her nausea was from migraines.)

"Did you ever have a lump in your breast?" Tisone texted McCluskey in July. "I think I told you I have one right? Since March."

"Yeah you told me," McCluskey responded. "It will go, just takes time especially while you're having a viral flare."

"Stephanie had told me during that time that she had seen a doctor multiple times," McCluskey says. "She also told me she had a viral issue." By this point, Schutzman had already told Tisone breast lumps can be "lymph or node related" but that she should have it looked at, and Ahmed had spoken about it with her. A couple of weeks later, Tisone reminded William of the lump. She became unable to work. Her father, a manager for government construction projects, covered most of her health costs, and a friend sent her money throughout 2017 to buy supplements. That August, she stunned her health community friends by missing the annual Woodstock Fruit Festival, and one of them came to visit her. She shared with the friend that she had a breast lump but assured her that she was talking to William.

"SORRY TO BUG you again but these things I am legitimately worried about," Tisone texted William toward the beginning of October. She was vomiting and her throat was starting to feel swollen.

"Think we will find a dr to come to house," he wrote. "Let's look tomorrow."

"If you get so bad and can't breathe, you can always call emergency," he said a few minutes later. "But I think it's just acids burning throat."

"I don't have a good feeling about having a doctor come here to draw blood," Tisone texted. She didn't have health insurance and didn't "want to get trapped and fall down the rabbit hole."

"I understand," he responded. "How is it."

Tisone had spent nearly two decades in the alternative health ecosystem, and by her own account, it's difficult to get a full picture of the advice she followed. "Just want to make sure you know I don't have a doc that's overseeing all this," she later texted William. "Just a mish mash of random people." Her reliance on this community was broader than William, but time and again she returned to him. "Haven't heard from anthony," Tisone texted a friend and former William assistant, "but Tienko says there is a virus in my intestines." She asked William if a chiropractor correctly identified her slipped disc and he said she did. She told him that Beaulieu had used her neuro-emotional technique over FaceTime. "Yayyyyyy!!!!!," he responded, adding, "That can help a sensitive nervy girl like you."

Tisone followed up a few days later about whether she should get blood work, and William said she should because her sodium level could have dropped from vomiting. She said she was vomiting less and asked if she still needed to.

William responded in a series of voice messages. "You're dealing with the shingles virus, tried and true, like 100%," he said in one. "I mean, that's the virus that flared up your disc, everything else."

If a doctor could come and draw blood, he said, it might make her family feel better. "I think your family really needs you to see you get at least a little support," he said, adding, "They could lose perspective over time, even though it's a slipped disc keeping you from getting up." Later that week, Tisone's nipple began to bleed. She sent William a photo of stains on her shirt and asked if she had a hiatal hernia. "You didn't have one months ago when I looked," he responded, "but now that you vomit this much it's possible."

When she asked what he thought of her bleeding "from my left nipple on same breast as cyst," he responded, "I'm not liking that at all"; "but don't want you worried right now"; "just get your back better"; "as your back gets better then the vomiting should stop"; "it should come together." He told her the bleeding probably didn't have to do with the cyst.

It had been about seven months since Tisone texted Schutzman about a lump in her breast. William and Tisone had exchanged hundreds of text and voice messages about her health. According to the phone records reviewed for this story, William never told her not to see a doctor. On at least several occasions, he suggested she seek other medical help. Over the same period, he told her he could do a bacterial scan on her, and she asked him to ask the Spirit of Compassion if there was "anything pressing on the nerves that we can't see with an MRI?"

Tisone wasn't getting any better. She had blood drawn the week after her nipple began bleeding and told William that her breast was throbbing where the cyst was. "When did the breast get this bad," he asked. After Tisone sent the results of her blood test, William wrote to her, "Can't fuck around with that," and said to get a thermography scan and ultrasound. Schutzman arranged to have a new mattress, bed frame, bedding, and pillows sent to her.

Tisone sought more clarity the following week. She told William in a voice message she didn't want to go to the hospital unless "you honestly agree that that is necessary" and that "you made it clear what I need to do for my breasts."

"Steph it is important to have the breast looked at and cared for for sure," William responded in a text. "It's always wonderful too that your family knows your reaching out for care, they must be very very worried about you so don't be afraid of getting attention from a doc on the breast."

About a week and a half later, in mid-November, Tisone texted him the results of her thermography scan, which showed an array of elevated temperatures. She sent him more blood work, and they started discussing mammograms and biopsies. She asked him to join her on a call with a doctor she was now speaking with, and he said he couldn't. "When we talk next about my breast can it be on the phone and can we ask spirit to help us see what's happening??" Tisone asked. "Thank you I love you." He didn't respond. She wrote again the next day after a family doctor called her with X-ray and blood results.

"What is a compression fracture?"; "I'm kind of freaking out"; "I need a plan"; "My goal and vision is that spirit and yourself will rd and scan me and will put me on a perfect protocol and my breast will heal itself with nothing invasive."

The next day, Schutzman texted her, "It's been super hectic the past few weeks but I will make sure Ant gets back to you ASAP."

William never texted her again, but Casey McCluskey relayed a thought in December: "I think all the vomiting and all the immobility has just given you a ton of pain. That's what Anthony said it would be a few days ago." (McCluskey says that she didn't speak to William about Tisone specifically and that it was a general conversation.)

Ahmed and McCluskey say they believed Tisone's family didn't want William involved, and McCluskey says she understood that the family took Tisone's phone away. Tisone texted with Schutzman a few times the following year. Tisone and McCluskey corresponded throughout the course of that year. Tisone's brother says her family never took her phone away or sought to limit her contact with William.

IN DECEMBER, TISONE'S family, now aware of the lump, took her for a biopsy. Before the results came back, she had a seizure that sent her to the hospital. Doctors induced a coma for three days, and she learned that she would never walk much again. She had stage IV metastatic breast cancer, which had eroded her spine.

"They're assuming it's tumors which is not smart as the radiation can cause problems," McCluskey texted her. (McCluskey says she was echoing another Tisone friend's fear.)

Most of the friends who took care of Tisone after her cancer diagnosis had some tie to the Medical Medium world. In August 2018, one of them made a trip to the beach with her. "She always was hopeful," the friend says. William's disappearance hurt and confused Tisone, but she kept faith that he had the answers. Her doctor told friends and family that they needed to be honest. He had been forthright about how much time she had left, and Tisone responded by asking if someone could contact William to check. "I'm alwaysss behind you," she once texted him. "It's my purpose."

In November 2018, Tisone died of breast cancer. She was 38 years old.

In her final weeks, the pain of William's absence lingered. "I don't want to die Can you PLEASE talk to anthony for me," she texted McCluskey five days before her death. "Maybe he will have a solution or something." McCluskey responded that she was sorry; she says she wasn't sure if the text was from Tisone.

NEWS OF TISONE'S death began to circulate. William offered another medical personality an unsolicited clarification that he wasn't responsible. A bit over a year after Tisone died, a friend wrote about her on Instagram. Sarah (a pseudonym) still mostly stuck to William's methods. She previously did work for Medical Medium, and was close enough to William that in 2018, they discussed her business proposal for a health retreat that never materialized. Her father had died shortly after Tisone, and in her post, Sarah reflected on their contrasting circumstances. Her father had undergone traditional cancer treatment, while Tisone "did all the healing protocols you can think of" and "was guided personally" by William.

Ahmed and Kimberly Spair, another health coach touting William's name, responded to Sarah's post by sending letters to their respective followings. Their notes covered similar ground and used much of the same language. Spair said that Tisone was not under William's care or a client of his and advised her followers to look past Sarah's post. "Vulnerability is real during healing, and the last thing we need is a story to be twisted and throw us into fear, doubt, and adrenal spiral," she wrote.

After seeing the letters, Sarah aired her distress in a blog post.

"The only people who knew Steph that are still connected with Anthony are the ones who are making money," she wrote. (Both Ahmed and Spair say they've never received money from William.) Still, she remained conflicted: "It was Steph's decision not to see a doctor. She's responsible for that," she wrote, but maintained that William "built a relationship with her based on this mutual belief that he had perfect information about her health." She told the story of Tisone's illness and death at greater length and elaborated on Tisone's closeness with William—even if she had stopped paying for sessions. "Yes, it's a fact that Steph wasn't a client of Anthony's," she wrote. "But now do you see how she was so much more than that?"

The back-and-forth among William affiliates set off debates across the network of Facebook groups formed around interpreting his work. The month after Ahmed's and Spair's letters, he did a live stream on the platform. "I've always known about the paid trolls out there," William said. He claimed that two women reached out to him and told him that a "corporation or this entity or group or some kind of association or something" contacted multiple people and offered "not a little bit of money, like a large amount of money" to "make up slanderous stories, tall tales, crazy claims to weaken Medical Medium credibility."

A FEW MONTHS after Sarah's blog post, in June 2020, Ken Turkel, a lawyer retained by William who has represented Hulk Hogan and Sarah Palin in their battles against Gawker Media and *The New York Times,* sent cease-and-desist letters to her and others who posted about Tisone's death. "As you supposedly know," Turkel wrote, "Mr. William considered Stephanie to be a friend, and for you to imply that he played some role in her death devastated him." Sarah had already removed the posts after the blowback. Turkel said that the record of text and voice messages would show that William had told Tisone to seek traditional care from a doctor, but did not include them out of privacy concerns. The matter began to die down.

Over the last few years, as both William's celebrity glow and the online discussion of Tisone dissipated, he has settled into a life of professional proximity to fame. He struck up a public friendship with Tony Robbins. Miranda Kerr told *New York* magazine that his book *Cleanse to Heal* "transformed the way I think about food." In August 2020, he wore dark sunglasses as he appeared on an episode of the short-lived podcast *In My Feels.* Cohosted by Noah Cyrus, the show had previously featured interviews with the life coach Jay Shetty and the business influencer Gary Vaynerchuk. William advised Cyrus to take up spirulina, cilantro, and wild blueberries. He talked about aliens on his podcast and posted a juice shot recipe for chemtrail exposure. "You can come and go as you please," William recently said in an online chat group, "which you can't do in a cult."

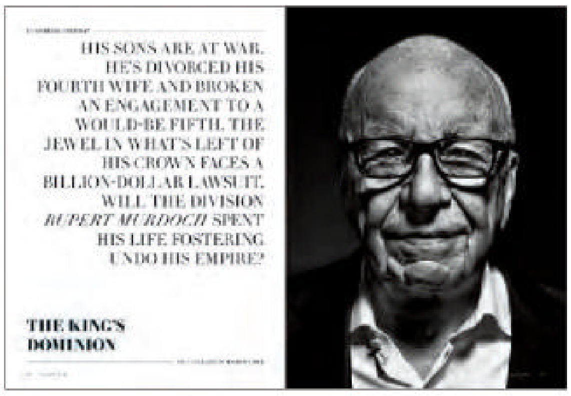
Friends who knew both Tisone and William continue to reckon with the role he played in her life, as well as the extent to which they went along with it. One recalls a maxim that William texted Tisone: "It's loving others and having compassion for others that's more important. So don't go too crazy loving yourself."

"He never said this shit to me," the friend says.

One practitioner I spoke to told me she abandoned her association with the Medical Medium after coming to terms with Tisone's death. She still keeps tabs on William on social media. "There's a new group after us," she says. "A new inner circle."

Nonetheless, she says, "I still feel best when I do what he recommends." ■

The King's Dominion



HIS SONS ARE AT WAR. HE'S DIVORCED HIS FOURTH WIFE AND BROKEN AN ENGAGEMENT TO A WOULD-BE FIFTH. THE JEWEL IN WHAT'S LEFT OF HIS CROWN FACES A BILLION-DOLLAR LAWSUIT. WILL THE DIVISION *RUPERT MURDOCH* SPENT HIS LIFE FOSTERING UNDO HIS EMPIRE?

THE KING'S DOMINION

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 67 a de facto dictatorship with oligarchal [*sic*] control by the party in charge now," one post said.

Murdoch and Smith had planned to marry this summer. He proposed with an 11-carat diamond engagement ring said to be worth upwards of $2.5 million. Then, a little more than two weeks after rolling out news of their engagement, the pair abruptly called it off. One source close to Murdoch said he had become increasingly uncomfortable with Smith's outspoken evangelical views. "She said Tucker Carlson is a messenger from God, and he said nope," the source said. A spokesperson for Murdoch declined to comment. (Smith did not respond to requests for comment on social media.) Still, the future of Murdoch's hobbled empire depends on viewers who share Smith's very outlook. What struck me most as I read the Dominion court filings was the fear that Fox executives and hosts expressed of losing their audience if they reported the truth, that Trump lost. I was also struck by how diminished Murdoch's own influence was. After the election, Murdoch told Lachlan and Suzanne Scott that Fox hosts should say Biden won and move on, according to a source who spoke to Murdoch. "I told Rupert privately they are all there," Scott wrote in an ensuing email to a colleague. "We need to be careful about using the shows and pissing off the viewers but they know how to navigate."

At one point, Murdoch even lobbied Trump to concede. "Rupert called Trump before Biden's inauguration to tell him to accept defeat graciously and that he had left a good legacy and that this stolen election stuff would drag everyone down," the source said. Trump refused. "Trump threatened to start his own channel and put Fox out of business," the source said. Murdoch seemed trapped by the people he radicalized, like an aging despot hiding in his palace while the streets filled with insurrectionists. ■

Playing for Keeps

PLAYING FOR KEEPS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 79 that framed Owens favorably was Breitbart. The only prominent people who offered Owens support were alt-right heroes like Mike Cernovich and Milo Yiannopoulos.

That was the red-pilling of Candace Owens. She started listening to Ann Coulter and Larry Elder. She read Thomas Sowell and Milton Friedman. She watched Fox News for the first time. She searched "black conservatives" on YouTube. "I became a conservative overnight," she said in an interview with conservative talk show host Dave Rubin at the time. "I realized that liberals were actually the racists." By August 2016, when Trump stood onstage at a Michigan rally asking Black Americans, "What the hell do you have to lose" by voting for him because "you're living in poverty; your schools are no good. You have no jobs; 58 percent of your youth is unemployed," Owens was hooked. "This moment—Trump's single question—forever altered me," she wrote in her book. That Trump's campaign flouted the media—a group Owens blamed both for what happened to her in high school and again with Social Autopsy—was the Reagan-red cherry on top.

At that point, YouTube was a cash cow for young conservatives with strong points of view. She teamed up with other Black conservatives and began posting under the name RedPillBlack. In her first video, posted in 2017, Owens acted in a sketch in which she came out to her parents: "Mom, Dad…I'm a conservative." Within a few months, she was on the right-wing speaking circuit.

When Owens took the stage at an event in Palm Beach, Florida, Charlie Kirk, the cofounder of Turning Point USA, could not take his eyes off her. He hired her on the spot. For two years, Owens and Kirk traveled the country together as she grew her social media following and created more YouTube content. It was her August 2017 video titled "I Don't Care About Charlottesville, the KKK, or White Supremacy" that sent her into internet virality and into the consciousness of right-wing hosts like Jesse Watters and Alex Jones. She became a regular on Fox News and a Twitter warrior unafraid to go after anyone or any topic, from Tomi Lahren to #MeToo, Ben Shapiro to Kim Kardashian. (West, who at the time was married to Kardashian, tweeted that he loved the way Owens thought.) In 2018, she traveled to Washington, DC, where she met with Trump about prison reform. The president tweeted that she was having "a big impact on politics" and represented a group of "very smart 'thinkers.'" She founded Blexit, a movement dedicated to driving minority support away from the Democratic Party. The idea, she's said, was born out of a chance meeting with Nigel Farage, the man who spearheaded Brexit. Owens was introduced to another Brit that year, George Farmer, now CEO of Parler, the alt-right conspiracy theory breeding ground slash social media platform. Seventeen days after they met, he proposed to Owens over FaceTime. Eight months later they got married, at the Trump Winery in Virginia.

On Blexit's public debut in 2018, Owens told Page Six that her "dear friend and fellow superhero" West had designed the organization's logo, which said, "We Free." Three days later, West denied any involvement with the design or with politics in general. The next day, Owens tweeted a statement that blamed the press for "trying to use Kanye's name to create drama and further divisiveness which is wrong," clarifying that he merely introduced her to a designer. "The insinuation that Kanye is now the author of my political movement is pointedly wrong and dishonest," her note read. "Let's not politicize love."

ONE MORNING LAST October, Owens's phone lit up with an urgent message from West. A few weeks earlier, Owens had gone after his ex-wife, Kardashian, calling her "a prostitute" and "a body without a soul," and referring to her mother, Kris Jenner, as "a pimp." West had been publicly feuding with Kardashian too while privately locked in custody debates. Maybe he was texting her about that.

He wasn't, it turned out. The details were nebulous, but he needed her to be at Paris Fashion Week. Like, tomorrow. She didn't know if he wanted her there as a member of the audience or as a participant.

It had been 11 years since West debuted his first collection in France, and in the intervening years, he had never failed to cause a stir. Whether a show would actually happen, where it was going to be, whether he could even find a PR agency to represent him, was unclear. Owens agreed to get on a plane. He was a big part of her story, she explained in a later interview. He had given her the courage to speak out about who she is. Plus, they had business to attend to.

She happened to be three months postpartum with her second child and going through it. Her Daily Wire show had just switched to filming five days a week. Her infant daughter had already been on 10 flights so that Owens could continue to breastfeed. Paris would be her first time away. "So it was a lot," she told me. "Nobody thinks about that stuff and it's not a complaint. This is the business I'm in. They see you as a character."

West wrangled Anna Wintour and Naomi Campbell, John Galliano, LVMH scion Alex Arnault. The crowd waited in an empty office tower just down the road from the Arc de Triomphe for the show to begin. Backstage, West was armed with two shirts—a black one and a white one, neither of which Owens had seen before. On the front was an image of Pope John Paul II and the words "Seguiremos tu ejemplo," or "We will follow your example." On the back, in block, all capitalized letters was the phrase "White Lives Matter," which the Anti-Defamation League has called hate speech and attributed to white nationalists, who began using it in 2015 in response to the Black Lives Matter movement. Instantly, Owens said in interviews and on her podcast, she understood what West was trying to express. She said that they wanted to call out the media hypocrisy and the fallacies of the BLM movement. "If Black lives mattered," she said, "things that I've been talking about throughout my entire political career," from (in her view) obesity to crime to family structures to educational deficiencies, "would be getting attention, not the T-shirt."

At a party the night before the show, a stylist who worked with West was going around showing photos of the shirts to a handful of fashion insiders, according to two people familiar with the situation, remarking on how incredible they were. Everyone else, these people said, universally agreed that they were offensive. West had been undeterred and wore one to address the crowd: "Everyone here knows that I am the leader," he declared. "This is an unmanageable situation."

That became increasingly clear, in the moments and hours to come. Jaden Smith walked out of the show, as did some editors and writers. "Indefensible behavior," Gabriella Karefa-Johnson, *Vogue*'s global fashion editor at large, posted on Instagram. (West viciously, publicly attacked her in response.) British *Vogue*'s Edward Enninful called the shirt "insensitive" and "inappropriate." West and Owens soaked up the outrage over omelets at the George V.

Owens and West had other business, though: Parler, the company her husband ran. The platform is well known for harboring right-wing extremism, disinformation, and antisemitism. It was one of the few platforms that welcomed Trump after Twitter banned him, the place where insurrectionists allegedly organized January 6. In early 2021, well before Paris Fashion Week, Apple and Google took Parler off their app stores, claiming that Parler had broken their terms of service by failing to have an adequate content moderation system in place. It had struggled to build an audience and even lagged behind Trump's Truth Social, widely considered a business failure. According to analytics from Similarweb, Parler saw just over 1.2 million visits a month for the past 18 before Owens's Paris trip. Still, in Paris after the show, Owens and West discussed the possibility of West buying it. Things went sideways from there.

For Owens, it started in the airport. It was 4:30 in the morning. She wanted to get home to her babies. She was carting a case of pumped milk when she was stopped by airport security. The guards told her that she would have to speak to international police, to which she said, Take me to your boss. Take me to your boss's boss. "This was very clearly my hill to die on," she told me, laughing as she mimed holding her fist in the air, a martyr with her milk. She argued with everyone she needed to. They let her through.

Outrage over the T-shirts had barely died down when West started a spree of public antisemitism. Days after the fashion show, Fox aired an interview between West and Carlson in which West accused Jared Kushner of orchestrating Middle East peace treaties in order to "make money." He also made comments about Kushner's brother, Josh, owning a greater percentage of Kardashian's Skims shapewear than West did. Days after that, Vice News published outtakes of Carlson's interview in which West said that Jews control finance, an age-old antisemitic conspiracy. West doubled down on social media. The public condemnation was swift, and his posts were deleted. Fellow celebrities denounced his remarks. The Anti-Defamation League started tracking his statements. LA's Holocaust Museum invited him to visit. Elon Musk tweeted that he'd expressed concerns directly to West. On October 9, West tweeted, "I'm a bit sleepy tonight but when I wake up I'm going death con 3 On JEWISH PEOPLE The funny thing is I actually can't be Anti Semitic because black people are actually Jew also." Twitter and Instagram suspended him.

Within days, Owens recorded a podcast announcing that the whole affair had ruined her Saturday. "I was having a great weekend until my phone exploded with text messages," she said. "Everybody asking the same question, 'Is Kanye West antisemitic?' " People had once accused her of being antisemitic, she pointed out—even though, she said, she had almost married a Jewish man before meeting her husband. She worked for Jewish bosses and had lots of Jewish friends.

Years earlier, she had spoken on a panel in the UK, and someone in the audience asked her if we should embrace the word *nationalism*. She responded by saying that *nationalist* had become a dirty word because "whenever we say 'nationalism,' the first thing people think about, at least in America, is Hitler."

"If Hitler just wanted to make Germany great and have things run well," she elaborated, "okay, fine," adding that he went beyond Germany, which made him, by her estimation, a globalist. Democrats played the clip at a 2019 congressional hearing on white nationalism for which Owens was called to testify. She claimed then that her words were taken out of context. In a recent podcast, she further explained:

"If you are an honest person, you did not think this tweet was antisemitic. You did not think that he wrote this tweet because he hates or wants to genocide Jewish people." She asked that people "be smarter" and "stop calling people names, it's a toddler game."

The Daily Wire had hired Owens in 2020 in an effort to bring on diverse conservative talent, which is a small pool. Ben Shapiro, an Orthodox Jew, cofounded the site, and its audience is filled with pro-Israel Jewish conservatives, many of whom passionately condemned West's words. Executives urged Owens to come down harder on West, according to people familiar with the conversations.

The Greatest Lie Ever Sold, Owens's documentary in which she depicts the BLM movement as corrupt and George Floyd as an addict whose death was the result of an overdose, was about to debut. The Daily Wire had funded the project. They were putting on the premiere. And they did not want the cloud of West hanging over it. When Owens insisted that West attend, executives asked her to please uninvite him. Shapiro did no promotion for the documentary on his widely popular podcast on the network, which several people in their orbit noticed.

Not only did West show up to the premiere, he did so wearing a "2024" hat, perhaps hinting at his own presidential run, in which perhaps Owens would be his running mate. Days after the premiere, Parler's parent company announced that West would buy the social media network for an undisclosed amount. In an interview with *The Wall Street Journal,* Farmer, Owens's husband, credited his wife for brokering the deal.

"It all felt really icky," one prominent journalist told me. "I don't know how it could seem like anything other than ick."

Owens touched on West in several more episodes of her podcast but never condemned him or his words. She talked about how important certain Jewish people are in her life—including her former boss, conservative radio host Dennis Prager, and his CEO, Marissa Streit, whom Owens referred to as a "sister."

Shapiro was asked at an event at Texas A&M University about West's behavior and his relationship with Owens. "Candace is great, but she initially gave a response that I thought was pretty wrong, both morally and sort of logically," he told the audience. "If she had said what Kanye had said she wouldn't be working at the Daily Wire. She did not say what Kanye said. Instead, she defended her friend initially in a way that I didn't like. But that is not a fireable offense. Nor do I even have the power of firing at the Daily Wire."

The colleagues tussled again on Twitter when Owens retweeted a known anti-Zionist who was criticizing the Anti-Defamation League. Shapiro called her out, saying that she was "[making] the conversation significantly worse," and, "It's garbage." Owens replied a few hours later, saying that she didn't know who the person was whom she was quoting, but that Shapiro could have reached out to her privately. "Real relationships," she wrote, "should trump Twitter theatre. Let's set a better example going forward."

Owens told me that part of the reason she stayed silent was that she did not feel like it was her place to condemn her friend publicly. Another, she said, was an allergy to what she called "black square culture," referring to the black squares on people posted as a way to show allyship during the BLM marches in 2020. She said she felt most of the criticism against her was coming from people with an axe to grind—former Daily Wire employees, people she'd tussled with on the internet—hoping that this would be the moment to get her. Meghan McCain, for one, who Owens says "hates my guts" after they feuded over her Trump interview about COVID-19 vaccines. "I actually may have outwardly said she was fat, I don't remember," Owens said. "But the point is that she held on to that anger and then tried to convert it into pretending that she cared about Jewish people. That's filth.... She didn't care about a Jewish person. And that's actually, in my opinion, more despicable. Using something that might mean something to a Jewish person who is genuinely scared or terrified, and you're pretending to care about this issue because you just hate Candace Owens. It's like you don't care. It's just, 'I want to see Candace Owens fall.'" (McCain did not respond to a request for comment.)

I told Owens that there are Jewish people like myself who were terrified to see banners placed on freeways in major cities saying that West was right to call for Jewish death, or white nationalists online who saw his words as a rallying cry. Knowing how influential her platform is, I asked her, wasn't there a reason to say something to those people?

"I'm sure. I think in every scenario that I've ever been in, there have been people that I thought that I could have said something more," she said. "There's always something more, something better that can be said. You're never going to hit pitch perfect, especially with something so delicate trying to weave through a friendship, a career, a new mom. And there's no way that I handled that situation perfectly, but I handled the situation in a way where I felt that I could lay my head on the pillow at night and not feel that I had wronged anybody."

She says the events strengthened her relationship with the Daily Wire. Company leaders believed that her words were not fireable, according to people familiar. They also felt that taking such action would fuel the stereotype. "It was an impossible situation," one person familiar said. "And then, like everything online, it kind of just went away."

BY THE TIME Owens wraps at eleven o'clock in the morning, she's had a full day. Up at four, she and her husband pray, read scripture, and meditate before she works out at her home gym. She spends an early morning hour with her kids before hair and makeup arrive at 7:45, then her driver and security guard whisk her off to be at the studio for a nine o'clock meeting with her team: seven or so producers who hail from MTV's *Catfish* or the Hallmark Channel. One was a contestant on *The Great American Baking Show.* On the morning I sat in for the taping of the show, the crew drank her in—from a Britney Spears impression to poking fun at someone she deemed "not a looker."

After taking an afternoon walk, she cooks her family dinner. People always want to talk to her about politics, she said, but she really just wants to talk about cooking—how she goes to the grocery store every Sunday to plan for the week, which mainly looks like chicken on Mondays, and pasta on Fridays since her husband is Catholic, with a Mexican night somewhere in there. She calls herself "OCD organized" and says she gets "a high from organizing" her pantry with a label maker.

She asked me if I've ever heard of a phrase her cousin just told her about. "Do you know what a trad wife is?" I do, and if you don't, it's a sort of June Cleaver–ing of Gen Z women on TikTok.

"God, how unhip am I? Yeah. I'm a trad wife. Put that in there," she instructs me, "and tell them I came up with it. I'm really traditional. I believe the men lead." She likes that there's traffic in town on Sundays because everyone's going to church. She likes that it's a place where people work with their hands. She likes that everyone in Nashville says hello to you, unlike when she lived in New York. That it's a place where people are kind. That's the one thing she thinks people most often misunderstand about her, she said. "I take my work very seriously and I'm very kind to people, and I wish that if I could wish something into the narrative, it would be that people knew how kind I was," she said. "Put that in there," instructing me again. "The media's been very successful at hardening me."

I asked her about her role in creating this character that people view as hard, and how that character has created so much of the divisiveness that dictates the political climate. "I square it honestly," she said, "which is to say a lot of people will sell you this mushy narrative that they want the left and the right to come together and hold hands and skip into the sunset. I want to win. There's no middle ground to me when it comes to transgenderism and kids taking hormone blockers. ["Transgenderism is a mental illness," she tweeted in March. "Keep your children away from transgendered individuals and their parents."] No, I want to win. There's no middle ground for me. When we talk about transforming language to refer to pedophiles as 'minor-attracted people.' [Owens was perhaps referring to the Old Dominion professor who said that pedophiles should be called "minor-attracted persons." They resigned.] No, no, I want to win. These are things that matter deeply. And so if I can knock sense into someone and bring them over to that side, great. Are there other areas where we could have a middle ground agreement on? Yeah, probably. But the stuff that really matters, no. I'm playing for keeps."

This seems to have won over folks in Nashville. Is she a celebrity in town? "I hate that word. It makes me want to die," she said, then, barely taking a beat: "I would say definitely. Yes." Everyone's been receptive and kind to her face in public, mostly, except for someone in the airport when she was wearing a MAGA hat. The woman told her the hat offended her. "I said, 'I want to let you know that I literally do not care. Literally not one bit, and you should find your seat.' I mean, how selfish," she said before continuing. "I actually once ran into Kamala Harris at the airport, she's very nice." Owens approached the vice president, who was then campaigning. "I can't stop myself. I told her I wasn't going to vote for her, and she was like, 'Yeah, okay. I understand.' It was a very nice conversation."

It doesn't always go so well. Earlier this year, Owens's husband reached out to the interior designer David Netto after the couple saw his work in one of their friends' homes in Nashville. Farmer filled out the contact form on Netto's website. "My husband wrote the most polite email because he's always polite, he's very English," Owens told me. "We didn't know if we could afford a designer or anything."

Netto responded, "Dear George, thank you for your inquiry. I'd rather get beat in the ass with a wooden plank than ever go near either of you. Kind regards, David."

Owens said the response floored her. "If a white conservative male had written that email to an outspoken Black liberal, he would've lost everything," she said. "They would've said it was like Jim Crow." Reached for comment, Netto pointed out that he'd only addressed Farmer, a white man like himself, and said "It's not a race thing, it's a terrorism/amorality thing."

"After January 6, the joke's over. People like this should expect to be recognized as complicit with something very dangerous—and I don't mean Kanye—and expect to be told off in polite society," Netto emailed *Vanity Fair.* "Without Parler the Proud Boys couldn't talk to each other, so that's enough for me," he said, adding, "They'll find somebody to do their house, and I'm sure it will be beautiful."

IF ALL OF this sounds like Owens is gearing up for a political run, it's because she herself has floated it. "A lot of people see me running for office, and I've learned to never say never," she said. "You might have spoken to me seven years ago and told me that I was going to vote for Trump, be working for the Daily Wire, I would've told you to go easy on the drugs. And so I follow the perspective that we have our plans and God laughs."

On a Trump redux, she says only, "I'd like to see who's running in 2024. That's one of the things that people have just very wrong about me—that I'm this ride or die. You don't even know who's running, who's going to be the best candidate, who has the best vision. I really very much disagreed with him about the vaccines. I was strongly against lockdowns. I say those things, but nobody hears them because they need to create the caricature of Candace Owens who never disagrees and is part of the Trump cult." (She added that she knows that she won't support Nikki Haley.)

She's not interested at this moment, though. She's launching a new show for the Daily Wire called *A Shot in the Dark,* geared toward moms, disseminating what she calls the truth and many call disinformation on the sorts of issues she says she wished she'd had more information on as a new mom—things like vaccines and household chemicals. She wants to launch a nontoxic makeup label. She plans on having four kids.

As with Trump, or West, it's hard to know whether she believes the things she says or simply believes in herself. Every person I asked for this story agreed it was the latter. "Truly charismatic people," one person close to her told me, "are able to talk themselves into anything. Outsized talents can do that, and Owens, she is an outsized talent."

Owens, when I posed it to her, looked bewildered. "I garnered my audience by saying what I believe," she responded. "I didn't have an audience [until] I said what I believed." She said she wished she could be fake—imagine how famous she could have been, she said. These battles she's fighting, she said, they don't make her popular. "They're not nothing. And I think some people think that. But we're not actually caricatures," she said. "We're actually saying what we believe." ■

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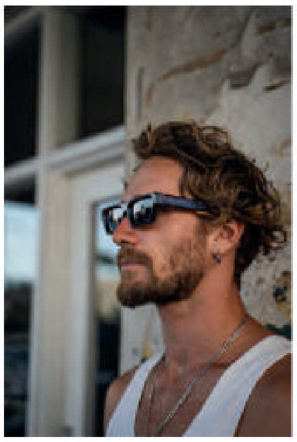
Style Selection

MIRACLES MANIFESTER

Miracles Manifester believes in the power of positive thoughts and manifestation, and implements this into their designs to create high-quality clothes that champion everyday inspiration and motivation. Through integrating rhinestones, embroidery, and reflective patterns into their designs, the brand encourages positivity and optimism in all their garments, making you feel the best version of yourself. Visit **miraclesmanifester.shop**
IG: **@miraclesmanifestershop**

VAMARO

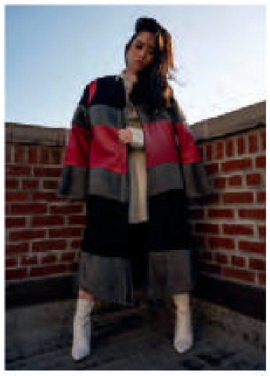


Introducing Vamaro, the luxury eyewear brand made for people to find their true vision. Born in the Gold Coast, Australia and founded by Corey Johnson, the brand focuses on creating premium handcrafted sunglasses, with quality and craftsmanship standing at the forefront of what they do. Vision is about unlocking a new set of eyes that are limitless, and with a pair of Vamaro sunglasses, only the sky is the limit. Visit **vamaroeyewear.com** IG: **@vamaroeyewear**

AMIAT

AMIAT - All Moods In All Textiles is a luxury fashion house that exudes creativity. Their artistic designers create original textile patterns exclusively in accessories, apparel, footwear and home decor. The iconic AMIAT logo stands for strength and balance. Visit **amiatluxury.com**
IG: **@amiatluxury**

JVLAURNT



Founded by Jennifer Laurantius, JVLAURNT is a contemporary genderless lifestyle brand based out of New York City. Their pieces are locally made and sourced using deadstock materials. They produce limited quantity pieces that focus on functionality, inclusivity and style – for those who live a busy lifestyle but want a hip wardrobe. They have been featured in numerous publications, with their pieces often seen on celebrities and influencers. Visit **jvlaurnt.com**
IG: **@jennifer_laurantius** and Tiktok **@jvlaurnt**

LAVEAU

Laveau is a sustainably-minded brand unafraid to be confidently lost, helping people see beauty within imperfection. The prints are pieces from drawings that are recreated into the adventurous, whimsical, and ethereal prints to commemorate and appreciate the hurdles one has to go through in life. They feature womenswear, sportswear, and home collections. Visit **laveaucollection.com** IG: **@laveauofficial**

LAYESION

LAYESION is a slow luxury brand that creates one-of-a-kind wooden clutches and bespoke homeware. Each piece is handcrafted with care by expert artisans in Switzerland, preserving skills passed down over generations. Visit **layesion.com** IG: **@layesion**

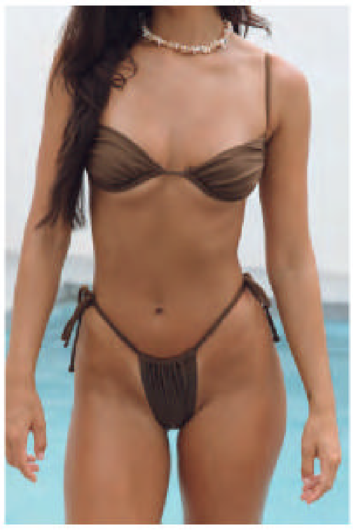
BELABRAND

Belabrand blends the beach and the city with unique pieces designed for all women. The new collection, named Blossom, is inspired by exuberant flora, natural fabrics and fluidity. And most importantly: for each piece sold, a tree is planted. Eco-conscious fashion! Visit **belabrand.com** IG: **@shopbelabrand**

HOUSE OF IKONS

House of iKons introduces André Soriano's evening and bridal collection. Their latest show in London was received with an emotional accolade from guests. Featured is one of their iconic bridal gowns made with luxury fabrics for a premium feel. Image credit Ram Eagle. Visit **houseofikons.com** IG: **@hoifashionweeklondon**

EVERIE SWIM



Introducing Everie Swim, a sustainable swimwear brand where the pieces are designed and made in California. They create figure-flattering pieces with buttery soft fabric made from recycled nylon and spandex. Their pieces are also affordable with all sets under $100. Visit **everieswim.com**
IG: **@everieswim**

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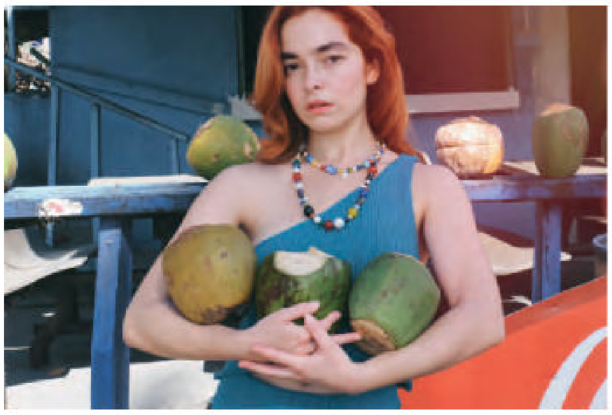
Style Selection

DODO BAZAAR

Spearheaded by Mauritian-Canadian designer Laëtitia Damonsing, Dodo Bazaar is a multi-hyphenate upcycling atelier that offers a selection of upcycled goods, circular fashion and serves as an educational platform on the circular economy. By combining her unique aesthetic, love of fashion, design and passion to create a more sustainable future - Dodo Bazaar was born. Products featured: Dodo Bazaar X Luiny Upcycled Jewellery Collection. Visit **dodobazaar.com** IG: **@dodobazaar**



AIYCHIM

Designed with a focus on textile technology, Aiychim's new revolutionary line takes you from flow to fashion with unique fabrics that are shaping but feel soft and buttery against the skin. Founded by two Scandinavian sisters, they believe in promoting sisterhood amongst women in the world of pilates. Visit **aiychim.com** IG: **@aiychim**

JREW CREATIONS

JREW CREATIONS create accessories with a modern look, redefining crochet as a high-quality fashion and art. Crochet is unique in that, unlike knitting or sewing, all crochet pieces must be done completely by hand. View their crochet streetwear at **jrewcreations.com** IG: **@jrewcreations**

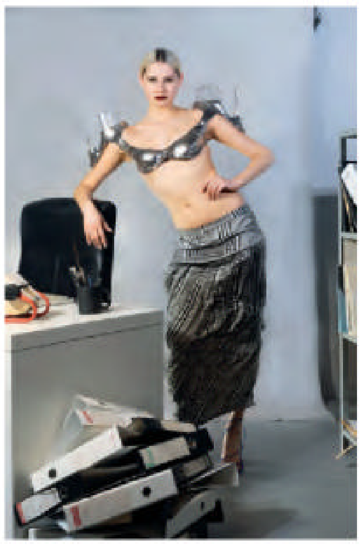
HANAN SHARIFA

Hanan Sharifa operates in a realm beyond this one, weaving fantasies into fabrics. The brand tells tales of how fashion has the power to captivate and to evoke beauty, joy and inner meaning. Handcrafted from start to finish in NYC, Sharifa's approach is meticulous; the intention is apparent during every stage of production. Sharifa's identity as a Moroccan American is at the centre of her practice, often printing her name Hanan in Arabic, which translates to tender or compassionate. Visit **hanansharifa.com** IG: **@hanansharifa**

REALNESS

Introducing Realness, a brand dedicated to curating beautifully designed clothes with minimal impact on the environment. Sustainability is at the forefront of what they do, and by using 100% sustainable fabrics and caring for everyone involved in the manufacturing process, Realness champions an effortless feminine style that doesn't compromise the environment. Visit **realness-store.com** IG: **@realnesstore**

AIKER



AIKER creates garments for contemporary women, unbound by a singular purpose in society and innately multidimensional. Their "Office Martini" collection is inspired by women who are not afraid to juxtapose the realities of office and nightlife. Visit **aiker.eu** IG: **@aiker.aiker**

MUTAYO EKIYE

Mutayo Ekiye is a high-end Afrocentric inspired handbag brand. Their handbags are handmade in Italy with material like caviar genuine leather. The brand believes that there is a need for far more variety of luxury handbags in an ever-changing world. Therefore, they have created beautiful Afro-centric designs. Craftsmanship and elegance in one. Visit **mutayoekiye.com** IG: **@mutayoekiye**

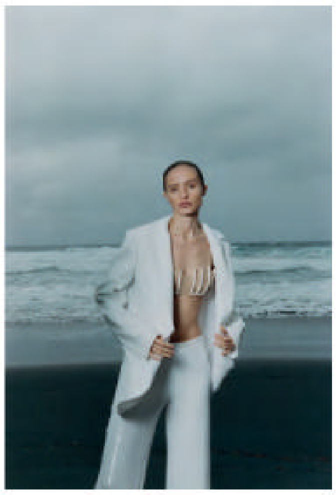
JURBAN

Jurban's streetwear collection celebrates individuality and unique style. Drawing inspiration from cosmopolitan cities such as Istanbul, London and New York, Jurban uses bold colours and fearless looks to make people stand out. Each piece is carefully crafted to empower young people to express themselves confidently and pursue their passions without hesitation. Visit **jurban.co** IG: **@jurbanwear**

CORINNA HOUIDI

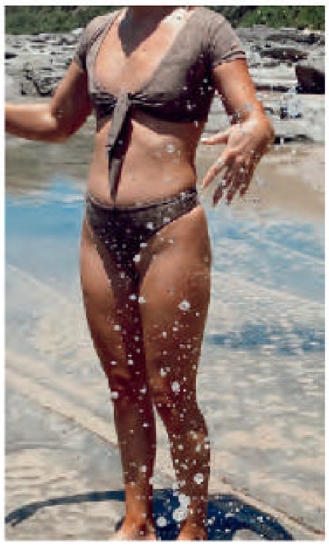
The German based brand Corinna Houidi stands for high-quality, individuality and independence. The label opens a world to luxurious high fashion, fused with the energy of the street, precise handmade details and strong silhouettes. Feminine and masculine elements, as well as soft and hard details leave a lot of room for unisex interpretations in the mostly very wide cut pieces. Visit **maisoncorinnahouidi.com** IG: **@corinnahouidi**

SEEZONA



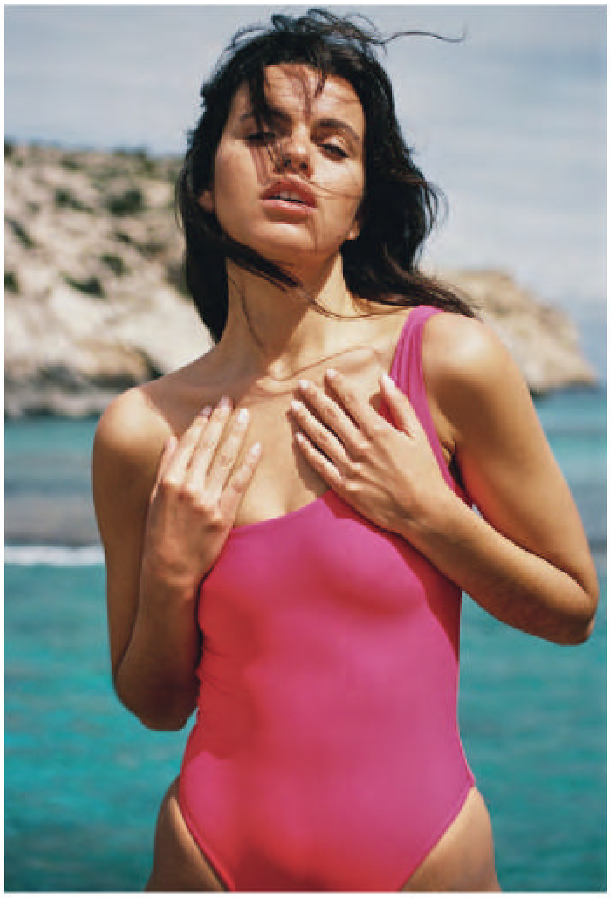
Swedish platform Seezona is your go to for discovering an eclectic range of fashion designers. With over 150 international labels, their curated selection offers a style for everyone, with low impact on the environment. Made in small volumes, it is more than looking good, it is about feeling good in what you wear. Visit **seezona.com** IG: **@seezona**

ABYSSAL BLU



Abyssal Blu is an eco-conscious swimwear label, created from recycled and sustainable materials. Designed in Australia; their focus is slow fashion. With a combination of thoughtful yet cheeky designs and buttery soft fabric, you will feel empowered and radiant when wearing their pieces. Visit **abyssalblu.com** IG: **@abyssal.blu**

BY LIMA



By Lima is a swimwear brand that focuses on sustainability, elegance and inclusivity. They create high-quality garments with Econyl®, regenerated nylon made from waste products, such as ghost fishing nets and industrial plastic. They also work with women from local communities to help ethically produce their swimsuits. Photographer: Espe Perello. Visit **bylimaswim.com** IG: **@bylimaswim**

NOT PERFECT LINEN

Not Perfect Linen is a linen clothing brand that ensures quality, promotes transparency, enforces sustainable practices, and does everything as ethically as possible. Why 'not perfect'? The beauty of linen is that it is imperfect. You will definitely miss its beauty if you keep trying to iron it. Linen needs to be used, and it gets better with age. Visit **notperfectlinen.com** IG: **@notperfectlinen**

SOOD

SOOD is a San Francisco founded brand designed in New York that seeks to embody dualism, self-expression, representation and collaboration. Founder and designer Sana Maqsood wants to help ignite confidence, promote inclusivity and re-define everyday jewellery basics. They are currently selling their Edge series produced in sterling silver and 18k gold plated brass. Visit **sood.co** IG: **@sood clothing**

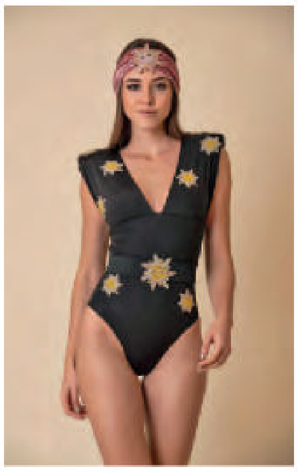
SAINT + SOFIA

Saint + Sofia creates wearable fashion and accessories that are produced fairly and sustainably. They design their relaxed, ready-to-wear styles in their London studios, and create them in their family-owned factories in Europe. Born in 2020, the brand already serves over 500,000 clients in 56 countries. Visit: **saintandsofia.com** IG: **@saintandsofia**

OTKUTYR

Introspective, poetic and thought provoking, OTKUTYR's Ramadan / Eid '23 collection evolves from its earlier theatrical and brightly coloured runway collections to a more subtle yet highly profound collection. Portrayed by the four elements of fire, water, earth and air, the collection illustrates the path less travelled; the journey of going through the motions of emotional turmoil. The brand incorporate variants of fabrics from whimsical gold and silver accented lace, to light blue liquid organza with contrasting shapes and cuts including asymmetric tops and free flowing dresses, catering to both an effortless and polished look. Visit **otkutyr.com** IG: **@otkutyrfashionhouse**

ORZA



The swimsuits created by Aurélie Alezeraa for this new collection invite you on a true journey in love with nature, islands and the stars, and the full moon beach parties. The sun, moon and star patterns are made entirely by hand in glass beads, each bead is assembled one by one. Photographer: Marc Richet. Model: Malissia. Visit **orzaboutique.com** IG: **@orza_luxury_swimwear_paris**

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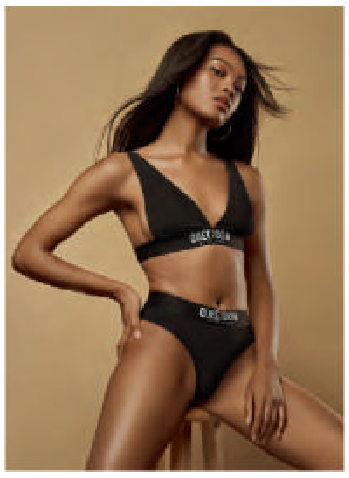
Style Selection

AIMÉE SWIM

A premium swimwear brand born on the shores of Seychelles, where quality meets the vibrancy of the tropics. They create high-quality and flattering eco-conscious swimwear that will last endless summers while evoking a sense of adventure, fun and tropical escapism through their vibrant colours and designs. Visit **aimeeswim.com** IG: **@aimee.swim**

QUEENDOM BY ROMANCE



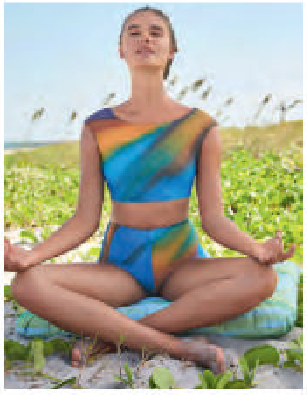
Queendom by Romance is a brand that was born out of love for creating and styling intimate apparel for the modern woman. This Chicago based brand offers a selection of high-quality, minimalistic pieces that are inspired by vintage glamour.

Visit **queendombyromance.com** IG **@queendombyromance**

ETTA GROVE

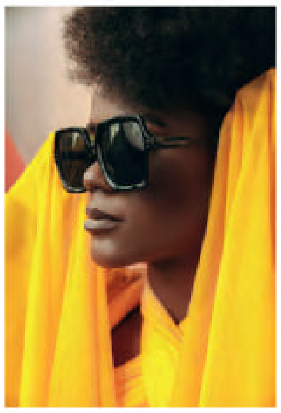
Etta Grove is a revolutionary start-up offering luxury, stylish women's footwear and unique handbags. The company goes beyond conventional sizing, thoughtfully designing and handcrafting fashionable, feel-good shoes from sizes 7m to 14m. The mother and two daughter team, whose brand is named to honour a cherished relative, is one to watch. Photo Credit: Danielle of Danielle Flowers Photo. Visit **ettagrove.com** IG: **@ettagrovefootwear**

INDIA BLAKE



Sustainable swimwear designed with a higher purpose. Inspired by the oceans and the beauty of the planet, their mission is to provide swimwear that helps you effortlessly transition through all the moments of your life. Designer, India Blake, draws on Mother Nature to create consciously crafted swimwear that brings a greater awareness to ourselves and the planet, using recycled fabrics where possible. Visit **indiablakedesigns.com** IG: **@indiablakedesigns**

HAUTELIFE WORLD



HauteLife World Eyewear is a chic and stylish eyewear brand founded by Fashion Stylist and Creative Director LaToya Mcleary. She recently launched a new eyewear collection named "Yaadie". The collection features vibrant colours and shapes as well as four unique styles, including "Trench Town" which was named after Bob Marley's home town. Photographer: Akeem Goldbourne and PR: Shakirra Torain (Torain Republic). Model: Roginea Dixon. Visit **hautelifeworld.com** IG: **@hautelifeworld**

VIKTORIA MARCHEV

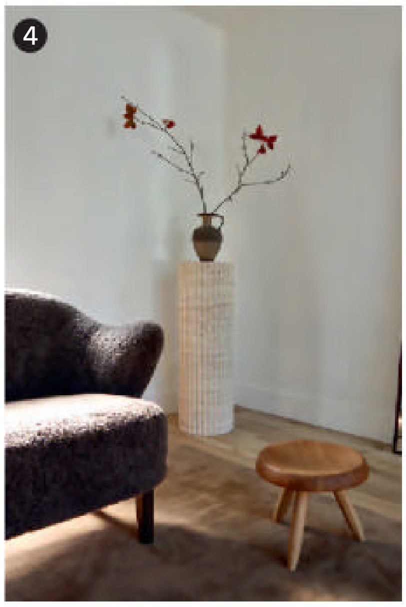
Viktoria Marchev has been experimenting with creating feminine and futuristic garments for women made of liquid silicone rubber. The unique technology creates visually pleasing, waterproof, flexible pieces. Her designs include swimwear and cover-up accessories. Visit **viktoriamarchev.com** and follow **@viktoria.marchev** on IG.

In Demand

3
THE SECRETS OF THE UNIVERSE

1. MR MONTY & ME is a luxury home and lifestyle boutique encompassing a specialised feel with their personalised dog accessories, including staple and timeless pieces that are stylish and will stand the test of time. Their products are designed and handcrafted in Melbourne, Australia, using the finest materials that your four legged friend deserves. Use code VANITYFAIR to receive 15% off of your purchase (expires 03/06/23). Visit **mrmontyandme.com.au** IG: **@mrmontyandme**

2. ANI BIOME supports clients' gut health with a personalised daily dose of fermented nutraceuticals. The convenient format of AgeBiotics™ is quick to prepare by pinching, folding and diluting in a glass of water. Monthly bundles of AgeBiotics™ are personalised for each client's unique microbiome with a 1-minute scan a day with AniDaily™ app. To find out more on how to begin your vitality journey visit **anibiome.ai** IG: **@ani_biome**



3. GRACE CRYSTALS & ACADEMY is a metaphysical centre providing mind, body and spirit solutions and spiritual education. The Secrets of the Universe Card Deck, by Rachel Grace, is for soul seekers wanting to know all the secrets and hidden wisdom of the universe. Use in readings or daily card selections while educating yourself on all the symbols and glyphs to unlock the mystery. Visit **gracecrystals.com** IG: **@gracecrystalsacademy**

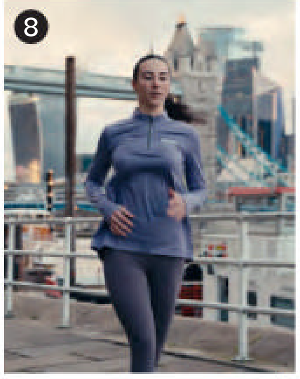
4. LA-based design atelier **FORM LOS ANGELES** is known for developing bold yet timeless furniture and interior objects. Modern forms derived from antiquity. Specialising in custom stone and marble pieces, with international shipping available. Featured is their Fluted Pedestal Size Large in Travertine. Visit **form-losangeles.com** IG: **@formlosangeles**

5. ARTCHI works with emerging artists to provide high-end art decor to people who believe art needs to be in our daily lives, against the perception art is only locked in museums and galleries. Their Hellenistic Sculpture Series was placed in the opening of the Alexander the Great Exhibition at the British Library and their work has been seen in a popular TV series. Visit **theartchi.com** IG: **@artchilondon**

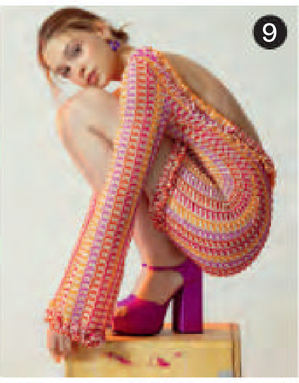
6. FAITH KU designs and creates unique one-of-a-kind nature-inspired ceramic artworks. Her work draws inspiration from the intricate structures of botanical and fungal life and the cycles of regeneration in nature. Visit **faithandcoceramics.com** IG: **@faithandcoceramics**

7
Jade & Joy
WELLBEING

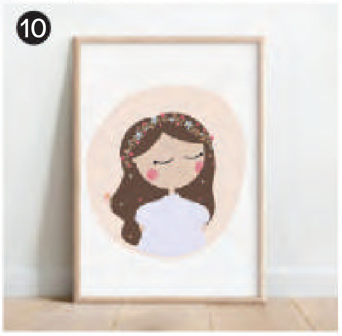
7. JADE AND JOY. Delicious protein bars delicately coated in Rainforest Alliance chocolate, made with 100% plant-based ingredients, low in sugar, gluten and dairy-free, and a great source of fibre. Each bar has more than 10g of protein, is low in calories, and is available in six mouth-watering flavours. Visit **jadeandjoy.co.uk** IG: **@jadeandjoyuk**



8. Established in 2018, **MORF ATHLETICS** brings a different value to the market with their range of high-quality pieces for everyday athletes. They are a female born and bred brand that empowers everyday athletes who aim to push their boundaries whilst balancing their job and family life around their training. Visit **morfathletics.com** IG: **@morfathletics**



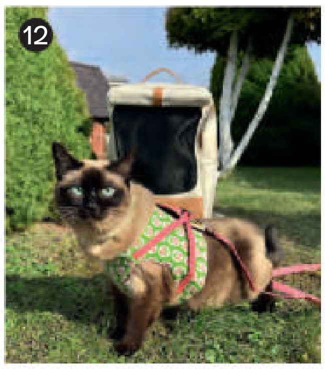
9. Founded by Ebru Yalcuk and based in Izmir, Turkey, **LAMPEROS ATELIER** is a luxury beachwear and resort wear label inspired by a chic Greek and Turkish summer lifestyle. Each collection is crafted from the highest quality fabrics, using unique colours and designs that you'll be wearing summer after summer. Visit **lamperosatelier.com** IG: **@lamperos_atelier**



10. JOLLIE BLUEBEAR is a Slovenian brand that will help you to bring beauty and warmth to your home with their heartfelt illustrations in soft pastel colours. Their style is based on simple style and high-quality design and everything that is created under the Jollie Bluebear's roof is made with the greatest love for kids and kids at heart. Visit **jolliebluebear.com** IG: **@jolliebluebear**

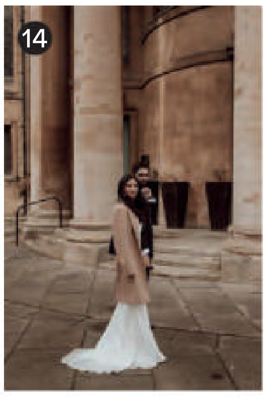
11
HELLO BABY

11. PEACHLY is an Australian brand created by a mum of two little girls. They make beautifully illustrated, linen keepsake books for parents to chronicle their baby's milestones and memories, from pregnancy to five years old. These one-of-a-kind memory books feature a minimalist style with modern neutrals, simple prompts, and plenty of space for photos. Each book is carefully crafted to last a lifetime. Visit **peachly.com.au** IG: **@peachly.com.au**



12. Introducing **MISSYMOMO**, the go-to brand for stylish travel gear to enhance your cat's outdoor excursions. Every cat should be able to enjoy the wonders of the outdoors, and do so in comfort and style. From harnesses and leads, to apparel and carriers, their products can be enjoyed by both owners and pets for a more pleasurable outdoor experience. Visit **missymomo.com** IG: **@missymomo_**

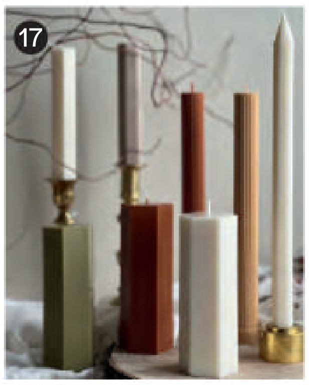
13. K MITCHELL COLLECTIONS is a thoughtfully curated range of luxury accessible baby goods. A timeless collection that is hand selected by a mother who knows how important it is to find quality, sustainable products for your little one. Visit **kmitchellcollections.com** and follow them on IG: **@kmitchellcollections**



14. JADE MARIE PHOTOGRAPHY. Surrey-based photographer, Jade, oozes authenticity in her photography through her documentary approach. With her creative eye, she uses natural light, expression and great attention to detail to create modern, romantic images that tell a story. Visit **jademariephotography.uk** IG: **@jade_mariephotography**

15. WOOF FRILLS creates adorable apparel and accessories for your beloved fur-baby. With a new winter collection available now, and sizes to fit all dog breeds, this is the place to find essentials, from harnesses and collars to ultra-soft blankets. Visit **wooffrills.com** IG: **@wooffrills**

16. Discover **MY BOUGIE BOTTLE**. This drinkware line fuses fashion and function for people on the go. Featuring gorgeous nature-inspired designs, their drinkware was created to encourage a sustainable eco-friendly future. With a range of stainless steel double-walled vacuum insulated 25oz. bottles and 22oz. tumblers, this line invokes the love for the environment and all its beauty within. Hydrate with Bougie today for a sustainable tomorrow. Available on Wolf & Badger. Visit **mybougiebottle.com** IG: **@mybougiebottle**



17. MAISON BOHITI is a contemporary candle house based in London that works with vegan wax to create handmade candles for those who adore art. Bohiti candles complement a variety of decorative styles and have a timeless elegance and cosiness. Visit **@maisonbohiti** on IG to find out more, or email **hello@maisonbohiti.com**

18. NEURITA TEQUILA is the new must have premium tequila this summer that's perfectly crafted for margaritas and, their signature, Margarita Spritz. Time to Neurita your margarita? Get 10% off your first bottle of Rosa or Citrus Tequila with code VANITYFAIR10 [expires 30/06/23] at **neurita-tequila.com** IG: **@neuritatequila**

19
DRIED MANGO

19. INSIDE THE PANTRY. Delicious, flavourful and ethically sourced premium dried fruit from sunshine-filled corners of the world. Tasty convenient wholesome goodness, full of fibre, vitamins and perfect for your everyday life. Visit **insidethepantry.co.uk** IG: **@inside_the_pantry**

20. KIKI & CASHEW pure linen swaddles, sheets and blankets help babies enjoy better sleep. Highly sustainable and better for the environment than cotton, it's as gentle on your baby's skin as it is on their world. Use code VF15 for 15% off [expires 29/05/23]. Visit **kikiandcashew.com** IG: **@kikiandcashew**

21
coco nutea

21. COCONUTEA. A unique blend of king coconut water, green tea and natural fruit flavours. Nothing artificial. Choose from six flavours – a subtle hint of lemon, peach, pineapple, soursop, passion fruit or strawberry. Discover their vegan and organic range at **coconutea.com** IG: **@coconuteauk**

22. Launched in 2022, **MYTH DRINKS** introduced their rum inspired alcohol free spirits. Say hello to fun, flavoursome drinks, without the fuss and minus the hangover. With their Myth Coconut and Myth Dark Spiced Rum drinks, feel the Malibu sunshine and summer fun in one glass. Visit **mythdrinks.co.uk** IG: **@myth.drinks**

23. ANGELCASTS are a luxury jewellery company which creates unique gold and silver jewellery by post. They can miniaturise children's and baby's feet or pet paws into beautiful pendants, bracelets and much more. Fully hallmarked and British-made for truly unique gifts to cherish for a lifetime. Visit **angelcasts.co.uk** IG: **@angelcasts**

24. Kris is a Filipina who found a home in Australia. Coming from an entrepreneurial family in the Philippines, Kris followed in her family's footsteps when she founded **DETI** early in her journey as a mother. Look out for Deti's 2023 collection that arrived in April – timeless clothing essentials designed to accompany little ones on all their adventures. Visit **detiphilippines.com** IG: **@detistudios**

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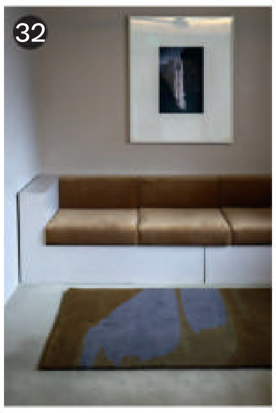
In Demand

25. ZOZO'S PAW is a modern dog accessory brand that thoughtfully blends design, functionality, and purpose into every product they make. Featuring handcrafted fray bandanas, each custom-made for your pup with premium, soft-as-a-cloud fabrics. Experience the full collection while giving back to pets in need by visiting **zozospaw.com** IG: **@zozospaw**

26. WRAPPED FLOWERS' dried eco arrangements are like no other. Everlasting blooms, made with London's finest stems complemented with a European touch. Colour clashing, bold, beautiful and truly unique. Shop spring/summer bouquets by visiting **wrappedflowers.co.uk** IG: **@wrapped_flowers**

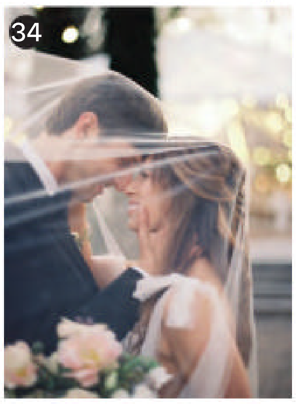
27. SOWVITAL, the premium horticultural brand, has had a vibrant growth into existence. Backed by science and beautifully formed by Leslie David Studios, the brand has successfully run pop-ups in London, Paris, and New York. As you read, Sowvital is part of a new campaign in Le Bon Marché, available to buy in store for their wellness season. This follows on from Sowvital's residency in Moulié, the longest running florist in Paris. Visit **sowvital.com** IG: **@sowvitalplantcare**

28. DOTTYPIX, two designers from North London, make exquisitely crafted pieces that are primal and joyful. Creating lifestyle objects for the future and for the present. A fusion of their collective vision and love for abstract art influences their work to embody surreal views. Minimal yet meaningful. Visit **dottypix.co.uk** IG: **@dottypix.uk**



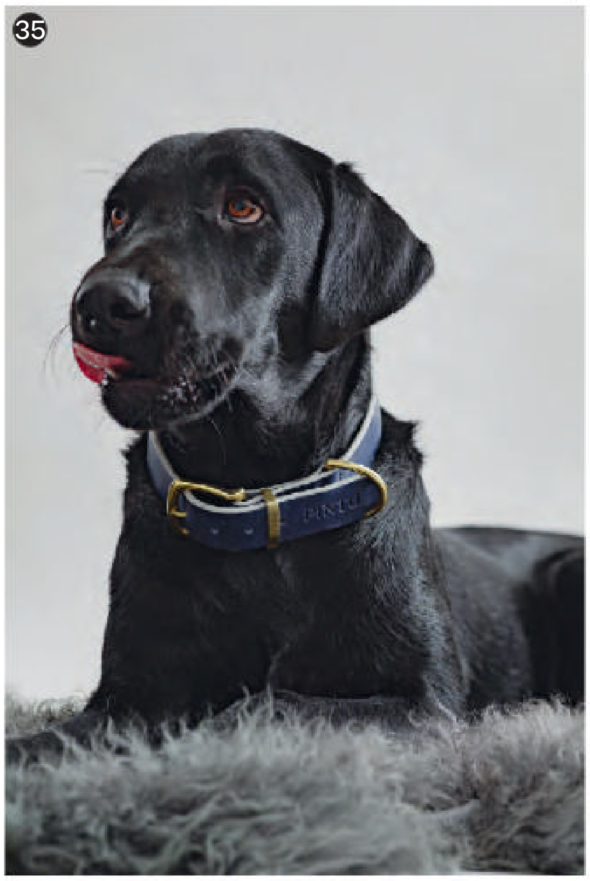
29. Using their bold, vibrant colour combinations from their original paintings and abstract artwork, **EARTHWORKS** has attracted a growing following for their interior collections - cushions, prints, lampshades, placemats and glass. Designed from their studio in St Ives, inspired by the West Cornwall coastline and landscape. Visit **earthworks.co.uk** IG: **@earthworksstives**

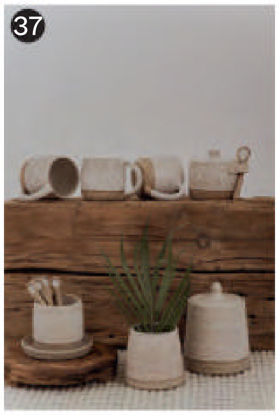
30. The epitome of luxury flowers. **HAUTE FLORIST**, a leading luxury online flower delivery service creates unique bouquets with you and yours in mind. Sourced from ethical farms, their artisan florists use premium flowers and foliage ensuring your bouquet is sustainable and hand-tied to perfection. Visit **hauteflorist.co.uk** IG: **@hauteflorist**



31. At **TINY TWINKLE,** unique materials set them apart. These include waterproof, recycled polyester, soft Kaffle and resilient food-safe silicone and plastics. They pride themselves on creating safe, high-quality products for babies, children and parents. Tiny Twinkle, helping little ones to "shine from the start!" Visit **tinytwinkle.com** IG: **@tinytwinkleshop**

32. NOIICH presents timeless rugs in limited edition seasonal collections. The series starts by creating a group of paintings, which are carefully worked to select the right colours, then transformed into rugs that are machine-hand-tufted by artisans. Visit **noiich.com** IG: **@noiich.official**





33. BONNIE X KIND's Founder, mother of two and fashion lover, Judy noticed when she was pregnant with her son that there was a deficit of elegant, timeless designs for new mothers. After realising friends and other mothers felt the same, she started sketching, in search of a better solution. Bonnie x Kind create beautiful bags helping you to dress up any outfit; they believe that certain things shouldn't be sacrificed just because you transition into motherhood. Visit **bonnieandkind.com.au** IG: **@bonnieandkind**

34. GEORGIA MILLER specialises in photographing weddings with an artistic, refined touch. Her photographs aim to capture the authentic feelings of the moment while also creating beautiful art to last a lifetime. Georgia focuses on destination weddings within the US and Europe. Visit **georgiamiller.com** IG: **@welcometogeorgia**

35. PINTU, for dogs and their people, is on the verge of finding and using materials and processes according to their impact on the environment. Therefore all components of these handcrafted dog accessories are eco-conscious. Pintu's designs are not only eco-friendly but also elegant, stylish and ensure ultimate comfort for your dog. Visit **pintu-design.com** IG: **@pintu_design**

36. COURTSIDE KIDS is an activewear brand with classic designs, a modern fit and performance fabric. Founded by a mum who saw a need for elevated athleisure wear for kids, Courtside had a sold-out first launch with three new collections coming soon. Visit **courtsidekids.com** IG: **@courtside.kids**

37. WHITELOFT CERAMICS is based in Canada. Amanda Payette is a self-taught potter creating hand thrown, functional pottery. The distinct neutral, hygge style is the inspiration of her simplistic aesthetic in her pieces. Visit **whiteloftceramics.com** IG: **@whiteloft.ceramics**

38. ANAÏS CAMILLE is a renowned multicultural artist based in Vienna, Austria. She is best known for her high-end designs and her kiss signature. Anaïs does not only create paintings but also unique, luxury objects such as sculptures. Visit **anaiscamille.com** IG: **@anais.creative.world**

39. NANCY D'S is an Irish baby gifts and accessories business providing high-quality products for parents and little ones. Creatively designed by a busy mummy of five, Clare, Nancy D's provides beautifully crafted giftboxes, soft breathable blankets, shoes and modern feeding accessories. Whether you're looking for a special baby shower gift or want to treat your baby, Nancy D's hardwearing products will be loved by your family for years to come. Visit **nancyds.com** IG: **@nancy_dsbaby**

The Beauty Round Up

1. YOUTHLAB's ProSculpt takes your Gua Sha skincare routine to the next level by adding the benefits of Heat 42°C (113°F), Vibration (8,000 rpm) & Red Light (630nm). It helps to leave your face, neck and jaw muscles feeling relaxed and appearing de-puffed and sculpted. Available on Amazon, visit **youthlabradiance.com** IG: **@youth.lab.radiance**

2. Harness the power of a signature scent with **URTHY SCENTS'** Eau de Parfum. Their very unique and innovative scent profiles are unlike single scent note perfumes or flowery perfumes. The essence of all their fragrances are natural and approachable. Visit **urthyscents.com** IG: **@urthyscents**

3. DOCTORS FORMULA Marine Collagen Anti-Ageing Day Moisturiser SPF 50 protects against UVA and UVB rays. Enriched with fatty acids and collagen amino acids. It aims to nourish the skin with moisture and reduce the appearance of fine lines. Get 75% off with code USESPF (expires 01/06/23). Visit **doctorsformula.co.uk** IG: **@doctorsformulauk**

4. Nourish your skin with moisture using **KORO GAIA**'s No Spa Facial. A blend of copper peptide, niacinamide and hyaluronic acid; combined with carefully selected native African botanicals. Treat yourself to the look of radiant, hydrated and healthy skin. Visit **korogaia.com** IG: **@korogaia**

5. Introducing the Youth Elixir Serum - the latest innovative launch from **FAB SKINCARE**. With a rich formula which aims to nourish the skin with moisture. Ingredients include squalane, niacinamide and hyaluronic acid. Visit **fab-skincare.co.uk** IG: **@fab.skincare**

6. Help reduce the appearance of cellulite and stretch marks with the **ALLAY SKIN** C&S Scrub. Made with 100% natural ingredients. This product helps leave your skin feeling hydrated. Say yes to skin that feels firm and smooth. Visit **allayskin.com** IG: **@allay.skin**

7. Bar soap does not need a plastic bottle. It also does not need any chemicals or preservatives. **LADSON'S** bar soap is made with natural butters and oils. It leaves your skin cleansed and feeling rejuvenated. Try their Rusted Mint bar today. Visit **ladsonscare.com** IG: **@ladsonscare**

8. Inspired by the Italian way of life, **LAMANO** aims to encourage everyone to practice slow living through the Lamano experience. Hands are a symbol of love, a symbol of expression, and most of all, a symbol of reconnection. Visit **lamanobeauty.com** and use code VANITYFAIR20 to save 20% off your first order (expires 31/07/23). IG: **@lamanobeauty**

9. Discover the TikTok viral QuickLash System from **AMOR LASHES**. Their vegan at-home lash extensions provide up to seven days of wear and can be applied from the comfort of your own home. Discover their range of styles and lengths at **amorlashes.co.uk** IG and Tiktok: **@amorlashesuk**

10. COVERLUXESILK is the home to everything self-care. Featured is their best-selling Lighten Luxe, which is a gentle mist packed with organic oils. It aims to lighten the look of your hair. Visit **coverluxesilk.com** IG and Tiktok: **@coverluxesilk**

11. KEE ESSENTIAL BEAUTY is a premium vegan and cruelty-free beauty brand that offers high quality products to transform your beauty routine. Their black-owned beauty brand is committed to offering plant-based solutions that make you glow from the inside out. Visit **keeessential.com** IG: **@kee_essential**

12. HANA - 花 meaning 'flower' in Japanese, is one of the softest feeling foundation brushes. Created by **ARTEMIS** as part of 'The Perfect 4' eco-friendly make-up brush set. Inspired by Japanese simplicity and centuries-old craftsmanship, these brushes are designed to make your makeup routine enjoyable. Using responsibly sourced materials, cruelty-free hair and recycled packaging; all truly reflecting ARTEMIS's core values. Visit **artemisbrushes.com** IG: **@artemis_brushes**

13. MILLION DOLLAR FACIAL Medi+ Sleep Tight Mask, a sleep-in mask that contains Vitamin C, milk thistle, cucumber extract, hyaluronic acid and glycerin. The mask helps to minimise the look of inflammation, whilst leaving skin feeling hydrated. Visit **milliondollarfacial.com** IG: **@milliondollarfacialsystem**

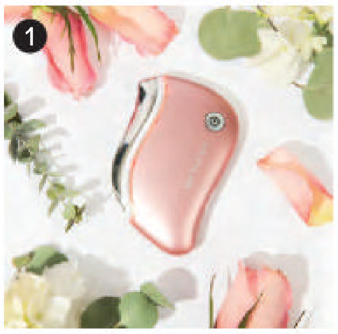
14. ANCOATS SOAP COMPANY creates artisan soaps and hand wash in small batches using butter, oils and carefully blended essential oils. They are lightly scented and create a rich and foamy lather. Their products are designed for modern-day lifestyles and to be as eco-friendly as possible. Visit **ancoatssoapcompany.com** IG: **@ancoatssoapcompany**

15. BROOSHA 100% plant-based skincare line made in Sardinia has been formulated for ageing, dry and sensitive skin and aims to leave you glowing. Their products are packaged in recycled materials and are designed for eco-conscious women that look for unique products. Visit **broosha.com** IG: **@broosha_consciousbeauty**

16. DAMANCI Elixir Argan Cream is designed to leave your hair feeling revitalised with minimal time and effort. Built on organic, naturally sourced ingredients. It doubles as a great styling aid, which aims to keep your hair looking bouncy. Visit **damanci.com** IG: **@damancihair**

17. AVYN SKIN. Founder, Margareta, crafted a game-changing all-in-one face cream which has received excellent dermatological test results and an ISO certification. Made with chlorella (a microalgae) plus other vegan ingredients. It helps to give the skin a radiant appearance and a youthful-looking glow. This melting-textured cream can be used in the morning or evening, plus as a pre-makeup application. Visit **avynskin.com** IG: **@avynskin**

18. GLOSSIFY's Professional Nail File is a must-have for helping to maintain the look of salon-worthy manicures at home. Perfect for smoothing and shaping, this file was crafted to last. Visit **glossify.co.uk** IG: **@glossifyofficial**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2
White Tigress

3
Anti-Ageing
Day Moisturiser SPF 50
MARINE COLLAGEN

4
Koro Gaia
No Spa Facial

5

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7

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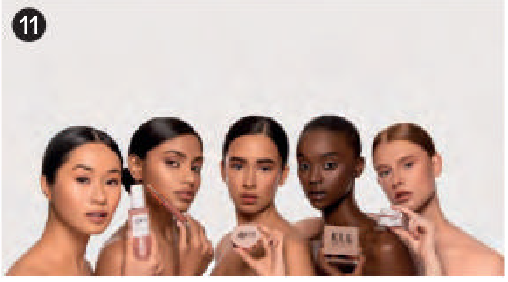
9
ALL OCCASIONS
AMOR

10
LIGHTEN LUXE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16
DAMANCI
ELIXIR
ARGAN CREAM

17
AVYN
FACE LIFTING CREAM
AVYN
FACE LIFTING CREAM

18

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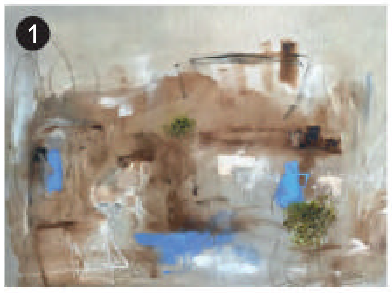
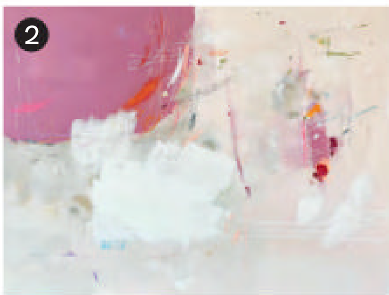
Curated Collection

1. HUDA HASHIM was born in Liverpool, England, originates from Khartoum Sudan and is now based in Dallas. Growing up she was always surrounded by different cultures, architecture and languages; this has allowed her to tell her diverse story through abstract mixed media contemporary paintings, by combining styles of the West with traditional Sudanese themes. Visit **manzilibyhuda.com** IG: **@manzilibyhuda**

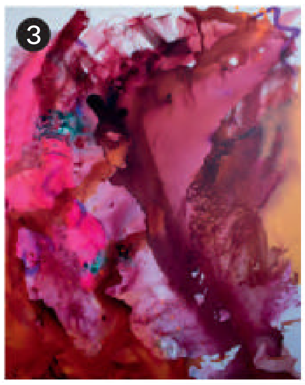
2. MICHAEL JAMES CISARIK is a self-taught abstract painter in Houston, Texas, USA. Cisarik is best known for pairing neutral undertones with contrasting accents and gritty textures to evoke raw emotions for his viewers like the painting shown, termed "Ultraviolet Tendencies". Visit **michaeljamescisarik.com** IG: **@michaeljamescisarik**

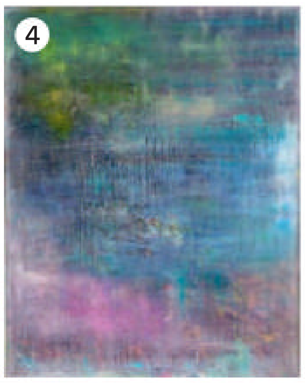


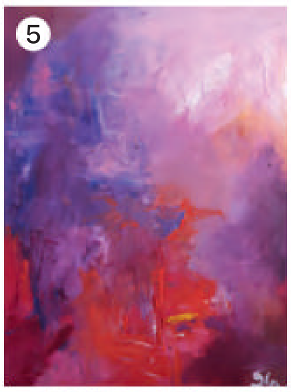


3. ALEXANDRA BAKER is a spiritually driven abstract expressionist painter. Alexandra heals, inspires, and shares her heart through the language of texture and colour. Featured is her 48 by 60-inch mixed media on canvas titled "Red Earth". Visit **alexandrabakerfineart.com** IG: **@abakerfineart**

4. BRIDGET WEISER is a self-taught contemporary artist based in Los Angeles, California. Through layers of accrued oil and acrylic paints, her striking and vivid work creates a space for the viewer to draw inferences from the architecture of their imaginations. Visit **bridgetweiserartwork.com** IG: **@b.weiser**



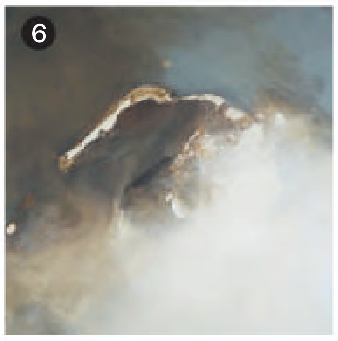


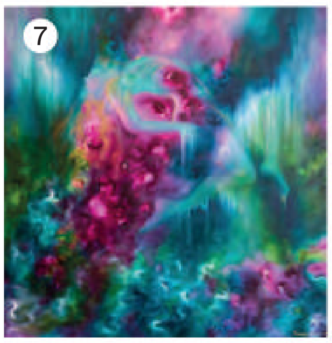


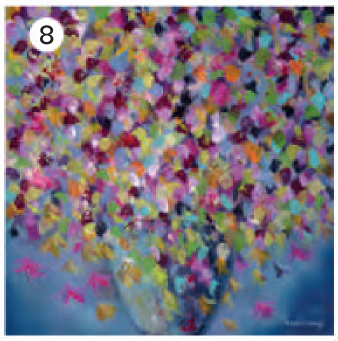
5. ILARIA RATTI SALVIONI is a Swiss artist based in Dubai. Her artworks are vibrant, energetic and optimistic. She works with matter and energy, powerfully infusing materials. She also creates customised artwork for clients, interior designers and boutique hotels. Featured is her piece titled Zadkiel. Visit **ilariaratti.com** IG: **@ilariarattisalvioni**

6. KRISTIAN SOMERA is a rising Filipino abstract artist from Manila. He is known for his use of understated colour palettes that evoke a sense of Zen among spectators of his work. Visit **kristiansomera.com**. IG: **@kristiansomera.art** or email **studio@kristiansomera.com** for inquiries.

7. In her series titled 'Femme Electric', artist **CASSANDRA GLANZMANN** [@fineartbycassandra] creates paintings as a vibrant celebration of women, their power, and their right to pleasure. In these abstract and figurative paintings, Cassandra highlights the bold and powerful women in her life; intending to remind women of their own innate magic. For more information about Cassandra and her work, contact Allison Thompson of AT Art and Interiors at **allisonthompsonstudio.com** IG: **@atartinteriors**

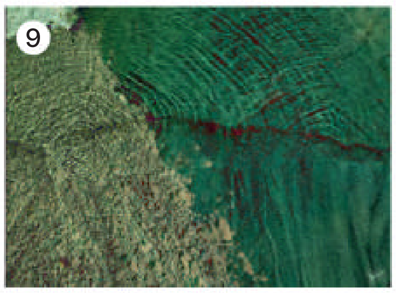


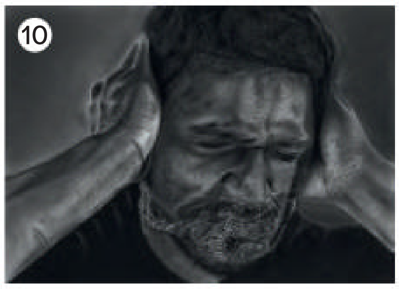


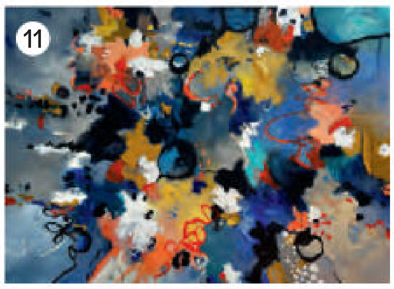


8. MICHELLE LINDSAY is an Irish artist originally from Dublin but now based in Tara, Co. Meath. Her creative style is vibrant textured pieces in oil, acrylic and mixed media. She creates one of a kind florals, landscapes and other original intuitive works. Visit **michellelindsayart.com** or IG: **@michellelindsayart** for more information.

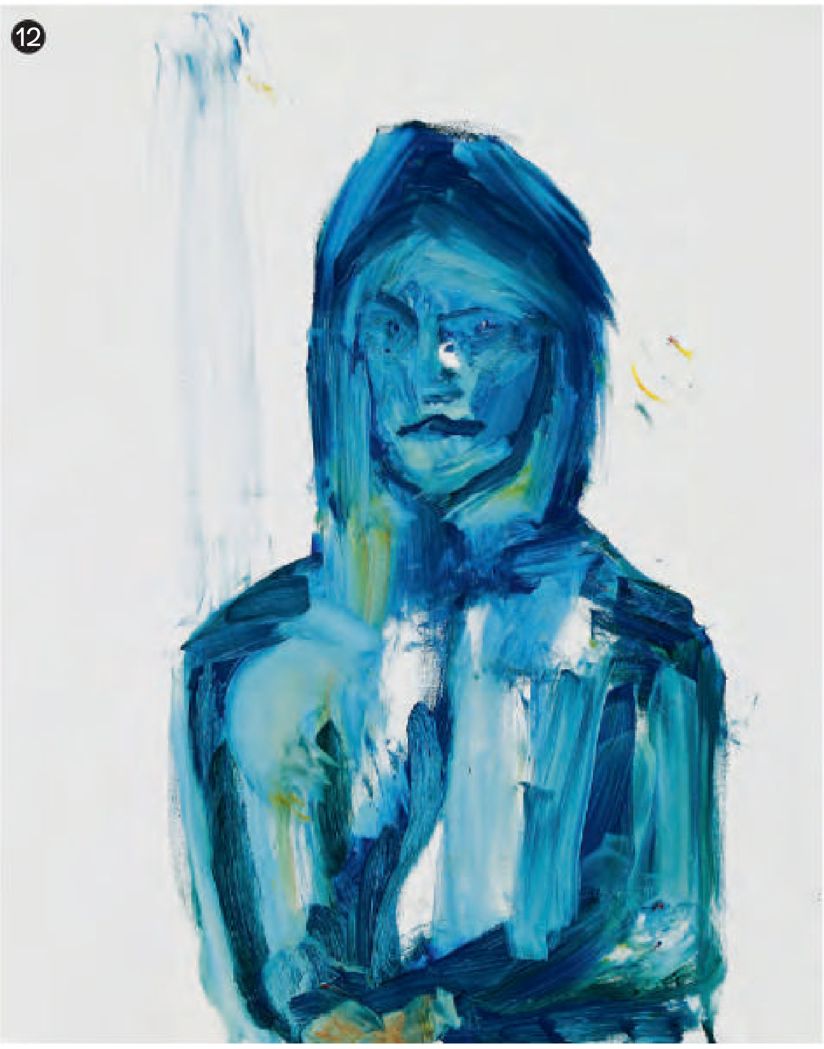
9. ANKE RIEMENSCHNEIDER is a multidisciplinary artist based in Basel, Switzerland. Her works are experiential spaces where feelings and stories of life are found. Her works are an expression of the deepest of humane emotions. They are melodic, harmonious and dense with meaning. Featured is 'Die Sanftheit La Gentilezza Del Verde'. Visit **art-riemenschneider.com** IG: **@anke.riemenschneider**



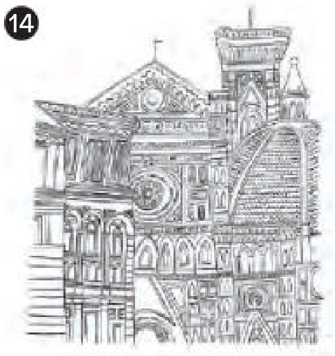




10. DULLAL MIAH is a UK-based, hyper-realism artist. He has always been fascinated by art, inspired by portraits and their ability to capture human emotions and experiences. His artistic practice is to create a story from his subject's emotions. His favourite tool is the pencil because of its ability to create tones and textures with a single shade. He is most known for his celebrity portraits as well as for creating portraits of his family and friends. Visit **dullalmiaharts.co.uk** IG: **@original_d_sketches**

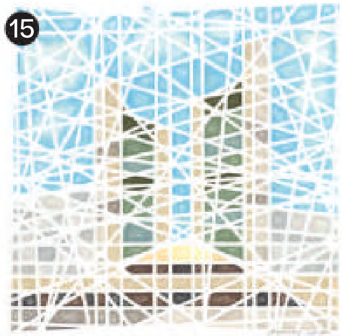


11. BRANDI LAUGHEY is a self-taught, South Carolina-based, American artist. Her work embodies a zest for colour, shapes and texture. She is inspired by the natural world and enjoys painting intuitively, using many layers to build depth and reveal unexpected surprises. Featured is her piece titled "A Wild Ride". Visit **laugheyart.com** IG: **@laughey.art**



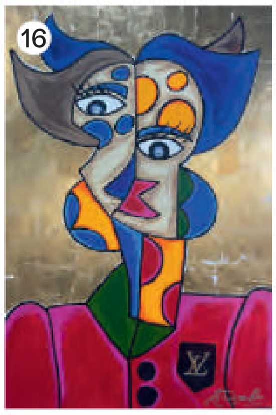
12. ROLAND KASSAR [born 1986] is a London-based artist who works from direct observation. Since 2018, Roland has been a resident artist at Store Street Espresso. Currently he is studying psychoanalysis and previously read philosophy, both of which influence his life and art. Visit **rolandkassar.com** IG: **@rolandkassar**

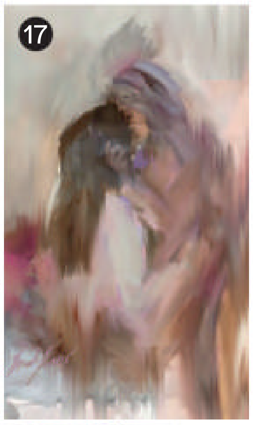
13. FRAU KERL Intellectual Design interweaves intellectual research on quantum energy with intergovernmental leadership. This big-picture perspective is published in the inspirational subscription-based Frau Kerl® Intelligence Brief and takes shape in the designer's big picturesque photo prints. Visit **fraukerl.com** IG: **@fraukerl**

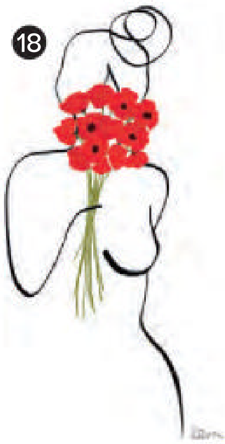


14. CAITLIN ELIZABETH is a Scottish artist who graduated from the renowned Design for Textiles course at Heriot-Watt in Galashiels. Her vibrant and striking prints capture the bright, energetic personality of cities. Visit **caitlinelizabethtaylor.com** IG: **@caitlinelizabethtextiles**

15. Toronto Artist, **JODY CLEMENT**, creates abstract landscapes inspired by her travels in Canada. Fine line masking is used to create her compositions resulting in abstract mosaics that are interactive for the viewer. Featured is her piece titled "The One with Toronto City Hall." Visit **jodyclementart.com** IG: **@jodyclementart**





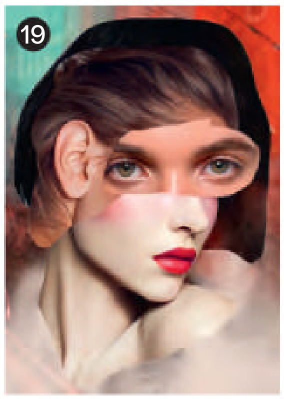


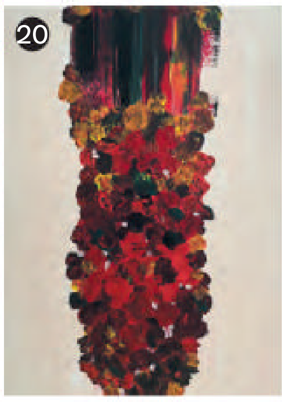
16. EMMA CAREY BAXENDALE is a multidisciplinary artist and designer with a stunning range of limited edition prints and original paintings. Currently residing between the UK and Spain, Emma has exhibited internationally. Visit **careybaxendale.com**
IG: **@carey_baxendale_ art**

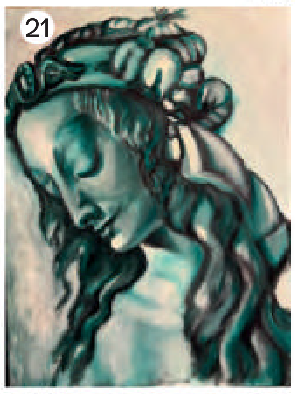
17. BRANDY MARS is a Canadian artist whose portfolio includes over 350 pieces aiming to bring representation to the LGBTQIA+ community. Her ambition with her art is to bring laughter and happiness to all, connecting with customers and sharing stories. Her shop sells home goods, clothing, art and greeting cards. Featured is her piece titled Pony Watercolour. Visit **brandymarsdesigns.com** IG: **@brandymars.blogspot.ca**

18. JUDITH CLARA, a notable German artist, is known for her unique style of drawing women using one continuous line. Her latest series features women with poppies, showcasing the delicate beauty and strength of women. Visit **judithclara.de** IG: **@judithclara.art**

19. Multi-talented and versatile artist **SEPHORA VENITES** uses a range of mediums and techniques. Her work is notable for its conceptual depth and capacity to graphically explore challenging concepts. By blending the best of both worlds in her distinctive and thought-provoking compositions using a combination of conventional and digital media, she is able to produce art that is both timeless and cutting-edge. Visit **sephoravenites.com** IG: **@sephoravenites**



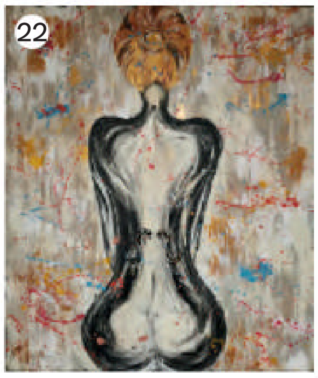


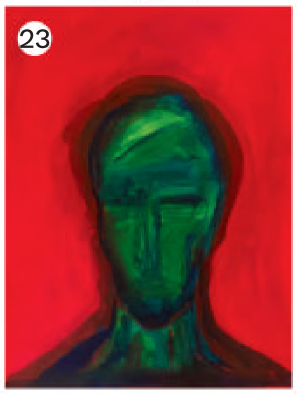


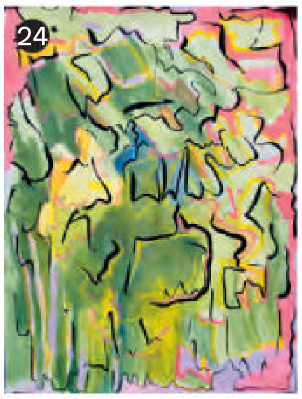
20. LUMINAR, the stage name of Alessia Rampoldi, is a self-taught Italian artist who discovered her talent in March 2022. Her impulsive art is all about colours and her paintings are a collection of memories, people, places and emotions. Featured is her acrylic piece titled "Flowerfall". Available at Galeria Azur Berlin. Visit **lumin-ar.art** IG: **@____luminar**

21. LO HENNESSEY is a Massachusetts-based artist and Doctor of Physical Therapy. She specialises in oil, acrylic, and watercolour paintings inspired by her education, travels, and imagination. Her work is characterised by vibrant colours, loud vision, and anatomical distortion. Visit **lohennyart.com** IG: **@lohennessey**

22. BEDE ART STUDIO. Beata Dencikowska began her artistic career as a pianist and opera singer but soon made a name for herself with her abstract paintings. Her paintings have been shown in exhibitions in Vienna, Munich, London and New York. Featured is her painting titled "Love. Desire. Fulfilment. Strad" - a personal dedication to all artists who have persevered, overcome numerous challenges, and followed the calling of art. Visit **bedeartstudio.com**
IG: **@beatadencikowska**

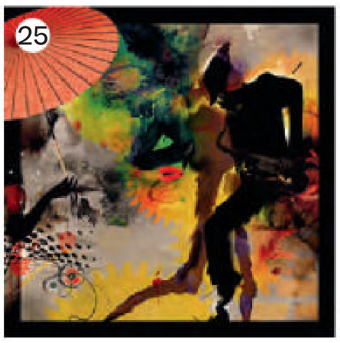






23. PAUL LEON ANDERSON is an American expressionist artist. Believing that colour is medicine, he expresses the human experience through use of vibrant hues and abstractions of the human face, to an almost psychedelic effect. Visit **paulleonanderson.com** IG: **@paulleon_art**

24. NORAH DINEEN is an award winning interdisciplinary visual artist, musician and actress. Through her creative practices, she represents the life renewing process of evolution and growth to eradicate the prejudices inflicted on the body by the images in some films and media. She studied painting and performance at Central Saint Martins, and has upcoming shows in the Tate Gallery, Los Angeles and Crema Gallery, Berlin in 2023. Visit **norahdineen.com**
IG: **@norahdineenartist**



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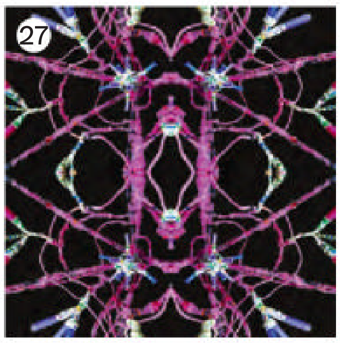
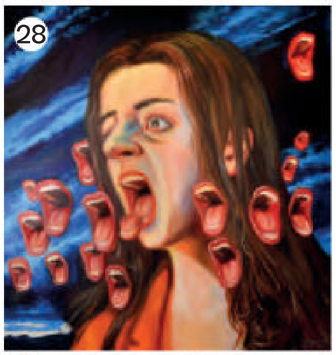
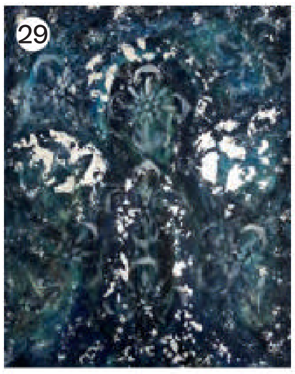
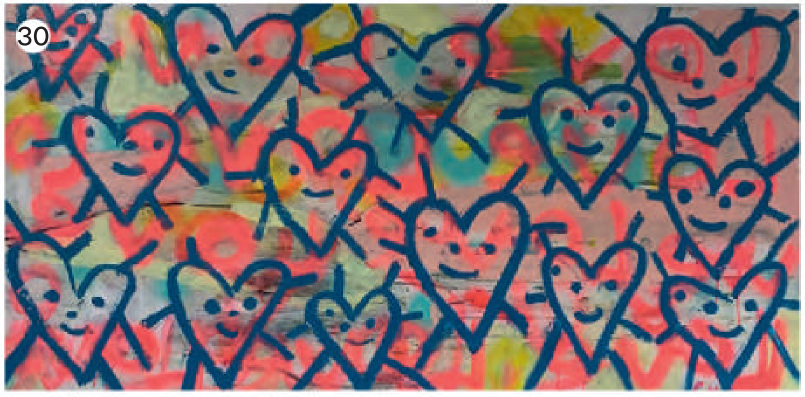
Platz
des 18. März




25. DORIANA SINNETT strives to express her personal vision through her art, using colour, music and imagination. Featured is her piece titled Baby, Play For Me. Music is ever-present in life. Its pulse is felt in every corner, its echoes reverberating through existence. It never yields to silence, for life is sound and sound is life-affirming.
Visit **atelierimagery.com** IG: **@dorianasinnettart**

26. ANDRÉA LOBEL tries to emphasise a certain tenderness in her works; a gesture or gaze that could have passed by almost unnoticed. Her photography is mainly in black and white. She feels it strengthens the focus and leaves the observation timeless. Featured is her piece titled Platz des 18 März.
Visit **andrealobel.nl** IG: **@andrealobel**

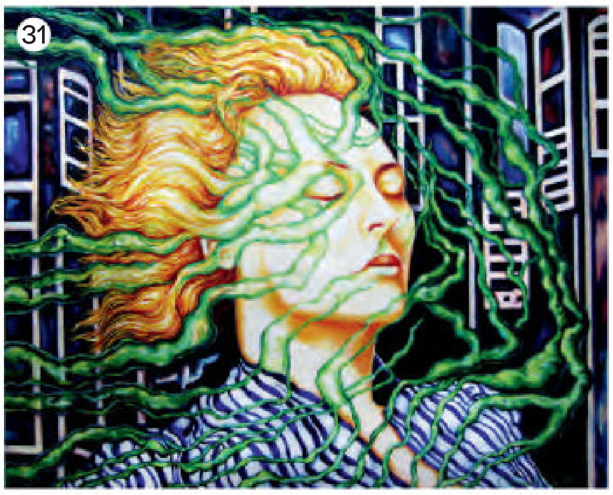


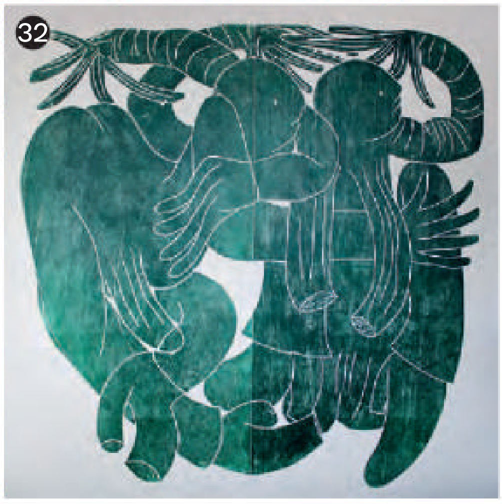


27. KATHERINE KENNEDY is a multidisciplinary Barbadian artist using organic and inorganic elements to circumvent tropes around femininity and tropicality, interrogating the complexities of existing within a contemporary Caribbean environment.
Visit **kathkennedy.com** IG: **@kathkennedyart**

28. KLÁRA SEDLO is a young artist known for her surreal oil paintings. Last year she focused on depicting emotions and relationships. Pictured is "Jessica Fogbow Screams". To explore more of her art visit **klarasedlo.com** IG: **@klarasedlo**

29. KATHY STANLEY is a Jamaican-born artist living on the US West Coast. A visionary artist and ecopsychology educator, her acrylic paintings and mixed media artwork reflect meditative inner journeys of exploring the ecological self, celebrating earth and invoking wholeness, joy and aliveness.
Visit **sacredartjourneys.com** IG: **@kstanleyart**





30. CHERIE HARTE is a Canadian artist following the tradition of Art Brut, Graffiti and Abstract Expressionism. Drawing inspiration from a traumatic childhood, Harte explores the intoxicating intersection where the monotony of daily life meets the deepest parts of her imagination. Cherie's work is held in collections throughout Canada, the USA, England, Australia, Korea, Taiwan and Japan. Visit **cherieharte.com**
IG: **@cherieharte_studio**

31. CARMEN DELPRAT's exotic art merges several styles including fine art, surrealism and symbolism. Through her art, Carmen captures an allegory of the natural world and transforms it into dream-like interpretations with alluring imagination and vivid colour. Visit **carmendelpratart.com** IG: **@carmendelpratart**

32. Inspired by awkward and uncomfortable social situations, **BARBARA KUEBEL** handcrafts lifesized woodcuts that serve as a whole-body experience. Although the monochromatic colours virtually pop from the canvas, her aim is never to draw attention away from the monumentality of the picture. The creatures in Kuebel's work are forced to connect with each other, forming knots and shapes that appear deformed at first glance. Her works are available online through Saatchi Art, Riseart, Artfinder and Singulart and she is represented by Jonathan Ferrara Gallery, New Orleans.
Visit **barbarakuebelart.studio** IG: **@kuba.art**

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The Jewellery Box

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1. LEMON STRAPS offers stunning jewellery watchstraps for Apple Watches. Their waterproof 18k gold-plated straps are ideal for any occasion. Dress your Apple Watch in style. Shop now at **lemonstraps.com** IG: **@lemonstraps**

2. These stunning, high polished Fear Not hoops from **ZOE HOOP** feel luxurious to wear. They are classic but have a unique twist with their diagonal line across the line. A stop sign against all fear. Handmade and woman owned with fair working conditions and wages. Visit **zoehoopjewelry.com** and follow **@zoehoopjewelry** on IG.

3. MAGGOOSH takes its name from Margarita's breakdancing nickname, and dance is at the heart of the inspiration behind her jewellery creations. Through the expert fashioning of fine materials into fluid forms, every Magoosh design embraces and compliments the natural movement of the body. Visit **maggoosh.com** IG: **@maggoosh**

4. Founded by Ileana Djujic, **FOXY PEARL JEWELRY** was born out of her love and passion for jewellery as an art form, specifically the intricacy of pearls. Pearls are multi-dimensional and communicate numerous meanings; they are elegant, classic, playful and striking. These adjectives inspire her designs. She also wanted to bring to life a brand that offers beautiful and distinctive designs that will last long after the season is over. Visit **foxypearljewelry.com** IG: **@foxy_pearl_jewelry**

5. US-based jewellery store **APRIL AFFECT** has unique designs inspired by flowers. Each one-of-a-kind piece is handcrafted to perfection and no two sets are the same, so you'll be sure to make an exceptional statement no matter the occasion. Visit **aprilaffect.com** IG: **@aprilaffect_store**

6. CECILIA CACI is a new brand that intertwines Asian and vintage influences, creating refined gold vermeil jewellery. Their collection includes everyday wearables alongside captivating designs with gemstones and elaborate patterns. Featured is their Wasanna Necklace - a perfect blend of lush jade and timeless sophistication. Visit **ceciliacaci.com** IG: **@ceciliacaci**

7. HEY HARPER'S first high-jewellery collection – Icons. This collection represents the brand's dedication to traditional craftsmanship through hand carving and intricate crystal encrusting techniques. The collection is inspired by the beauty and strength of flowers, and created with the intention of designing a piece that captures both the delicate grace and the thorny edges of these natural wonders. The Gilded Thorn Ear Cuff is a one-of-a-kind ear cuff that features a flower shape with intricate details and delicate thorns. Visit **uk.heyharpershop.com** IG: **@heyharpershop**

8. CADARO is a high-end jewellery brand which has earned international recognition for its decadent designs. Having won the European Design Award in 2019 and 2022 with its kinetic and multifunctional collections, the brand still stays true to its sophisticated designs. Offering a bespoke service and signature collections, Cadaro's intricate designs continue to captivate the hearts of jewellery lovers around the globe. This white gold ring with amethysts and diamonds illustrates the elaborate and artistic essence of the brand. Visit **cadarojewellery.com** IG: **@cadarolondon**

9. BON BOHÈME jewellery is inspired by the luxurious shades of summer and the ocean. Their mission is to consciously handcraft each design in small batches to avoid waste. Specialising in pearls and gemstones their jewellery is bold and timeless, designed to make you feel extraordinary. Visit **bonboheme.com** IG: **@bonboheme_**

10. ERA JEWELLERY. Elizabeth Rose Antiques are unique antique jewellery specialists and passionate designers, best known for their timeless antique gems and inspired re-designs. Their new ERA designs hold powerful messages; it is their mission to empower you and create a soulful connection between you and your ERA gems. Visit **elizabethroseantiques.com** IG: **@elizabethroseantiques**

11. ÉLAINE THE BRAND creates jewellery that is sustainable in both ways. Through timeless designs and through durable, recycled materials. Every piece is designed with love by founder Huelya Kula. Utilising only high quality materials you can wear it with pride, knowing that you're doing your part to help make the world a more beautiful place. Visit **elainethebrand.com** IG: **@elainethebrand**

12. ERICA HALEY is a contemporary jewellery brand that creates timeless pieces, designed to fit perfectly and enhance your natural beauty. Their pieces are handcrafted in gold-filled and sterling silver, designed to elevate any outfit. Featured is the Lion Necklace; 14k yellow gold-filled. Visit **ericahaley.com** IG: **@ericahaleyjewelry**

13. Discover the Lux Brumalis Collarium from **HOUSE OF MATINI**, a Swedish fine jewellery brand founded by Jessica Angelique Matini. Their creations are magnificently crafted, combining traditional craftsmanship with cutting-edge technology. Visit **houseofmatini.com** IG: **@houseofmatini**

14. BUZZNSTING is a black woman-owned contemporary fine jewellery brand based in New York City. Each piece features bee iconography; Egyptians view bees as sacred, believing that their Sun God created these insects from his tears. This spirituality is carried through their collection, symbolising divine power, majesty, wisdom, love, mercy and justice. Visit **buzznsting.com** IG: **@buzznsting**

15. Every piece of jewellery from **BY HAZEL LONDON** carries a unique touch of passion and dedication, making it as special and one-of-a-kind as the person who wears it. Discover their collection of precious designs that embody both the beauty of the materials and the heartfelt spirit of their craftsmanship. Join them on a journey of timeless elegance and let By Hazel London become a cherished part of your story. Visit **byhazellondon.com** IG: **@byhazel_london**

16. ALFRA JEWELLERY, is a newly established fine jewellery brand designed by two sisters, based in London. Alfra's pieces provide a timeless yet classy elegance, designed to empower women. Eternal treasures can be found at **alfrajewellery.com** IG: **@alfrajewellery**

17. FULLORD. Starghost Earrings in 18k rose gold with multicoloured sapphires. The Starghost Earrings feature a minimal yet complex design, combining a rounded square outside with a circular inside giving life to unique volumes and proportions. Its iconic shape makes the earrings unusual yet classic. Designed in Switzerland, made in Italy. Visit **fullord.com** IG: **@fullordgeneva**

18. ASSUWA is a female-founded, sustainable, artisan jewellery brand. Connect with nature and ancient wisdom through unfolding forgotten stories with each talisman. Designed to last a lifetime, their mystical collections are handmade, unique and perfect with imperfections. Visit **assuwa.co.uk** IG: **@assuwa.jewellery**

19. KATHRINE LINDMAN NORWEGIAN JEWELRY is based on elements from nature. Her signature series are made of silver and enamel inspired by the plant and wildlife in the sea. During the recent years she has been experimenting with casting of dried seaweed. Visit: **kathrinelindman.no** IG: **@kathrinelindman**

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20. Introducing **NIKO**, an African-originating, luxury jewellery brand dedicated to offering artisan, yet authentic jewellery for the global traveller. Created by prolific Nothern-Irish designer Penny Winter, she integrates her experience in costume design and the Kenyan fashion industry to create beautiful pieces that are sustainably produced and deliver positive impacts on local communities. Visit **nikoafrica.com** IG: **@nikoafrica**

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21. HAYCREATES craft handmade resin jewellery and home décor, based in Yeovil, Somerset. They create their designs from home, drawing inspiration from flowers and nature and adding a touch of glamour. Shop their products on Etsy: **etsy.com/uk/shop/haycreatesshop** IG: **@hay_creates**

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22. LNB JEWELLERY is a new name among jewellery brands. Founded by Natalya Bobrova, she transferred her unique knowledge of design, brand building and buying into a successful brand creation. The highest quality gemstones are used in their creations, which allows for bright colour variations, truly amplifying the couture quality of LNB Jewellery and adding a unique charm. Visit **lnbbrand.com** IG: **@lnb.jewellery**

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23. SOUL OF A GYPSY introduces their meditation rings. Made with an elegant .925 embossed sterling silver base band, adorned with a combination of seven natural brass, copper and sterling silver outer spinners bands with freshwater pearls embedded to personify grace. Visit **mygypsysoul.com** IG: **@soul.of.a.gypsy_boutique**

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24. Introducing **LUCKY LOTUS**. They are a small quantity jewellery studio based in Hawaii, creating beautiful pieces with intention from treasure collections by land and sea. Visit **luckylotushawaii.com** IG: **@luckylotushawaii**

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25. VICTORIA EMERSON is a family-owned business founded in 2012 by husband and wife, Jamie Ferguson-Woods and Jane Hemingway. Designed at their Toronto, Canada-based head office, their goal is to provide beautiful and affordable jewellery for everyone. Featured is their Rebekah Bangle. Visit **victoriaemerson.co.uk** IG: **@victoriaemersondesigs**

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26. DEL ESTE JEWELRY was founded by Italian designer, Maria Teresa Tupini. Her passion for jewellery design is palpable, intertwining classic designs with contemporary styles, bringing a modern edge to fine jewellery. Striving to empower women with each piece, making the wearer feel confident when sporting bold yet elegant designs. All her pieces are handmade in Miami, available to order worldwide. Visit **shopdeleste.com** IG: **@shopdeleste**

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27. HANNO, exquisite, handmade jewellery designed by renowned Sako Hanno from Stockholm. By using an extraordinary combination of old-fashioned utensils with modern devices they create jewellery that is completely unique and made to order. Visit **hannostockholm.com** and follow on IG **@hannostockholm**

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28. Based in Japan, **TAMIKO JEWELLERY** is a fine jewellery brand offering beautifully curated, modern pieces. Featured is their beautiful ring from the SA-KU collection which is inspired by the flowers blooming. The petals consist of layered openwork patterns of 18 karat yellow gold and 18 karat white gold, with a pink amethyst surrounded by diamonds. Visit **tamikojewellery.com** IG: **@tamikojewellery_japan**

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29. A homage to the beauty of handcrafted objects, **MAISON SOULA**, creates beautiful, contemporary jewels with a refined, elegant feel. Each piece is designed to express craftsmanship and love for what is made by hand, with a touch of colourful stones as well. Visit **maisonsoula.com** IG: **@maisonsoula**

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30. HANADIS JEWELRY is a Jordanian brand known for its high-quality sterling silvers and innovative designs. While majoring in Chemical Engineering, Hanadi found her passion in jewellery making and decided to follow her dream and start running a jewellery business. Her unique and joyful designs captured hearts and she is now expanding her business in the UAE and Palestine. Visit **hanadisjewelry.com** IG: **@hanadisjewelry**

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31. Introducing **JACX CARTER DESIGNS**. Founded by TieSha Carter in 2021 as part of her creative therapy, she specialises in handmade, eclectically designed necklaces, bracelets and earrings. She believes jewellery is a form of self-expression, individuality and identity. Hoping to inspire her customers to find a connection with their identity and individuality. She uses a variety of materials including glass seed beads, wooden beads and polymer clay. Visit **jacxcdesigns.com** IG: **@jacxcarterdesigns**

㉛

32. SYSKI is a modern Amsterdam based jewellery brand fusing minimalist aesthetics with effortless elegance. They're dedicated to creating season-less pieces that are made to last for generations. All SYSKI jewellery is handmade to order from recycled materials, including 9 karat solid gold and sterling silver. Visit **syskistudio.com** IG: **@syskistudio**

㉜

33. Founded by Char Sidney, **THE WANDERING JEWEL** meticulously creates a beautiful range of jewellery pieces, for women who aren't afraid to break out of the female expectations of society. Featured is a piece from their Disengagement Ring collection, made with a choice of 18-karat yellow or white gold, for those who are championing their single selves and and treating themselves to a present of self reflection. Visit **thewanderingjewel.com** IG: **@thewanderingjewel7**

㉝

34. Inspired by the mythology, history, and terrain of the Mediterranean, **MISENO** is a modern, yet classic, collection of fashion-forward, fine Italian jewellery. In addition to their iconic creations, Miseno presents one-of-a-kind, high jewellery so unique they could only make one. Visit **misenousa.com** IG: **@misenofinejewelry**

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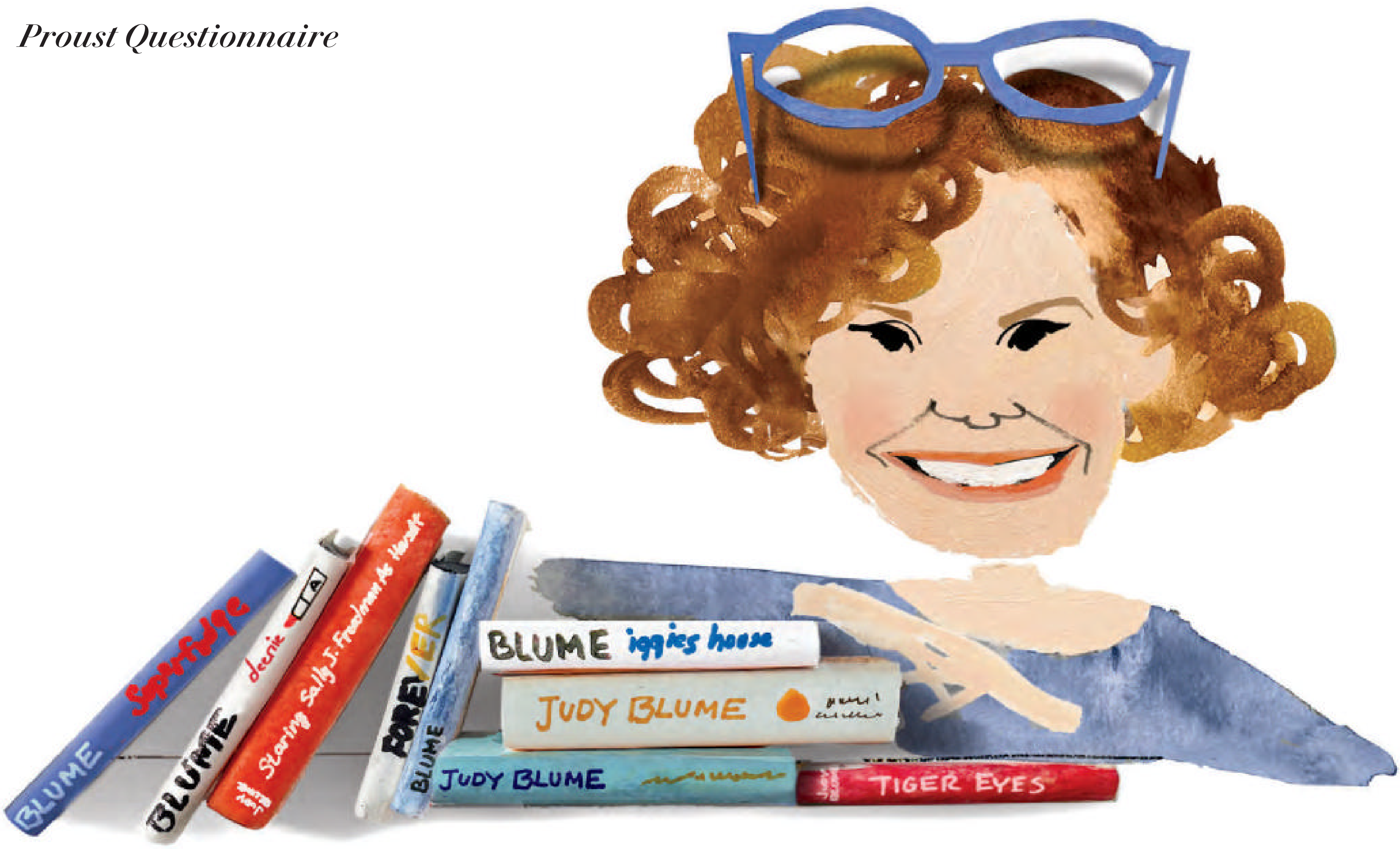

JUDY BLUME

The beloved author on the magic of old friends, lucky charms, and investing in a fancy toilet

What is the trait you most deplore in yourself? My phobias. I'm down to two, so I take that as a positive sign. **What is your most marked characteristic?** I'm an optimist. I like to sing and dance around the house.

What is your greatest fear? That we're going down the tubes as a country (make that the whole world). **Which talent would you most like to have?** I'd love to be able to cook the way all our grown kids do. They make it seem easy. Eight people dropping in for dinner? No problem. Me, I'm still having anxiety dreams before a dinner party. **What do you consider your greatest achievement?** That I found the courage to write and didn't give up. **What or who is the greatest love of your life?** That's easy. It's my husband and soulmate, George. We've spent 43 years together and I've never been bored. He is funny, smart, and loving. **What is your idea of perfect happiness?** A balmy, moonlit evening in Key West. George and I are enjoying a pasta dinner on the balcony overlooking the ocean. Ella Fitzgerald is singing in the background. **What is your greatest extravagance?** My fancy toilet. When you sit down you hear birds tweeting. It's freaked out a lot of friends, and me too when it first arrived. I thought birds were captured in the walls of our building. I think you can change the sound but I've never tried. I love my birdsongs. **What do you dislike most about your appearance?** At 85, I appreciate everything that still works. **What is your most treasured possession?** I have an old Navajo silver cuff. You can see it in every photo and video. Do I believe in good luck charms? I'd have said no, but recently when I thought I'd lost it, I was terribly sad. **What is your favorite journey?** Coming home. **How would you like to die?** Really? Okay, if I have enough time I might go to Switzerland and drink the drink. I believe in euthanasia. What we do for our beloved pets, we should be able to do for our beloved humans or ourselves. **Where would you like to live?** Since I live in Key West, it's hard to come up with anything better. **Who are your heroes in real life?** The surgeon, oncologists, and nurses who were there for George and saved his life. **If you could change one thing about your family, what would it be?** I'm not into changing anyone, and certainly not my family. **What do you most value in your friends?** I love that my true friends don't think of me as *that* Judy, but as the Judy they've known for years, a woman, like them. And I love their senses of humor. **What is it that you most dislike?** Please don't tell me what to do. Don't tell me to relax or take a deep breath. I might bop you over the head (gently, of course). ■

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VANITY FAIR

SPRING 2023

On Time

The POWER *of*

CYNTHIA ERIVO

Photograph by
DANNY KASIRYE

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HAS LED TO THE PERMANENT
AND UNCOMPROMISING QUEST FOR THE OBJECT
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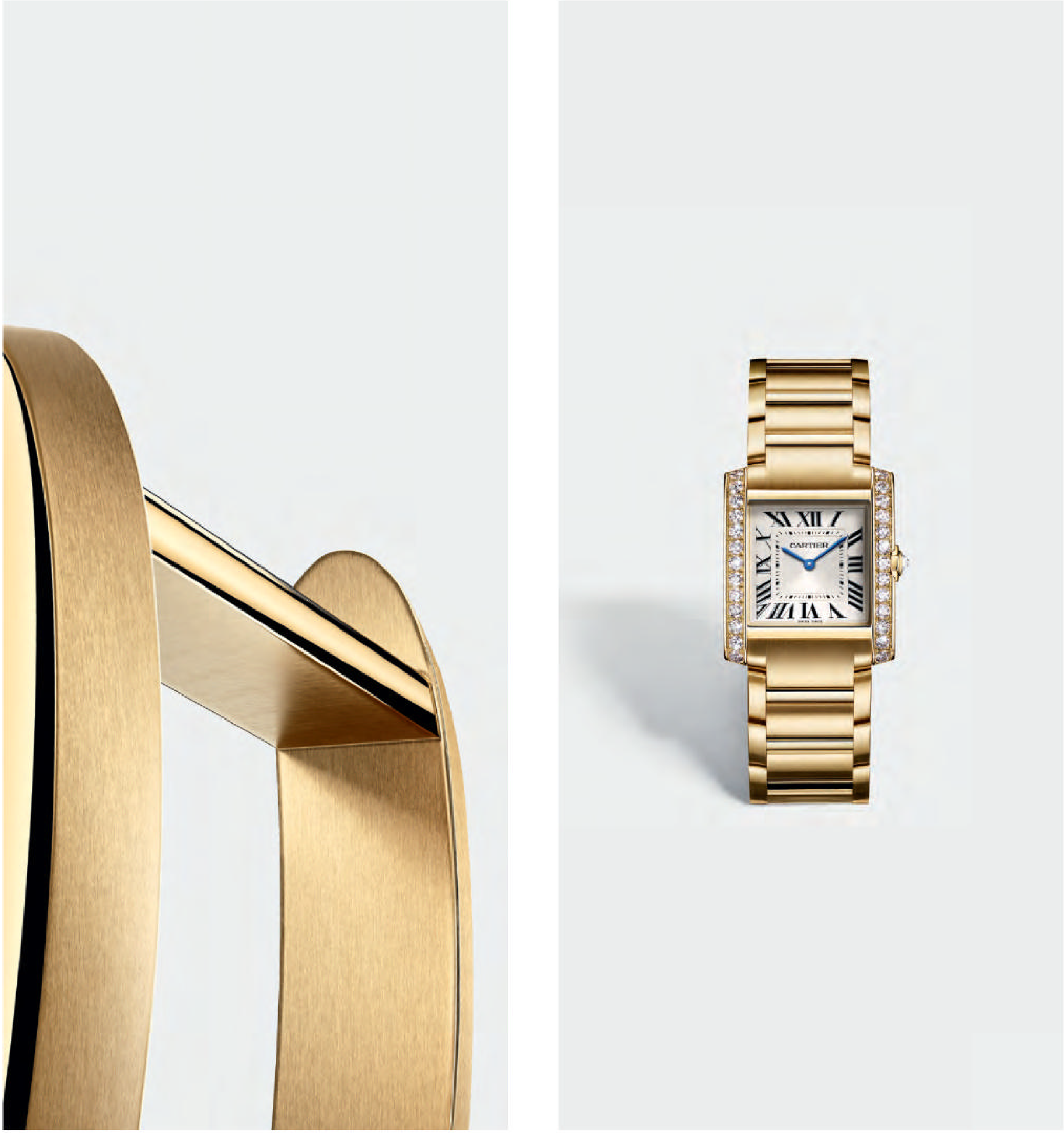
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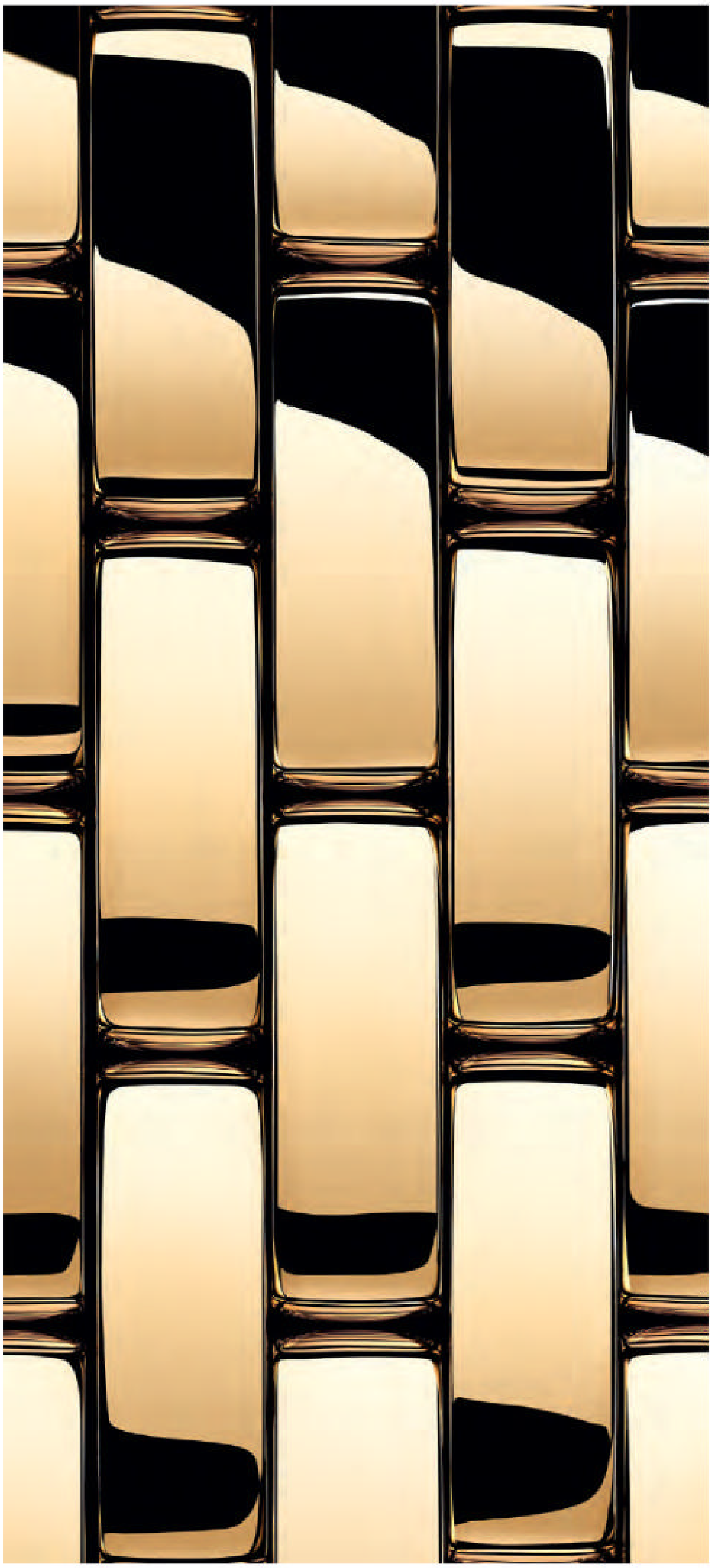

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75

SERPENTI
75 YEARS OF INFINITE TALES

As a term used to describe the capacity of culture to persuade rather than to coerce, "soft power" can be rather misleading. I suppose it is the latent sense of oxymoron that is deceptive.

The "soft" almost cancels out the "power", or at least implies a sense of nebulous insubstantiality. Yet when I visited Abu Dhabi this year, I found nothing nebulous nor insubstantial about the massive museums rising from the sands of the Gulf Emirate. To stand as I did, like the tiny lone human figure one finds in the foreground of a painting by Caspar David Friedrich, dwarfed by the massive sprawling structures consecrated to culture—some complete, some still taking shape under the desert sun—is to unambiguously appreciate the power and importance that we assign to intellectual achievement and creativity in its myriad manifestations.

I was in Abu Dhabi to visit the Louvre, in particular the exhibition of the work of finalists in the annual Richard Mille art prize (see p52); it came as no surprise to me to find a voracious appetite for culture in one of the world's most vibrant and active markets for horology.

This issue of *Vanity Fair On Time* is dedicated to both the importance of culture to watchmaking, and the cultural importance of watchmaking. Watchmaking is arguably unique in being the meeting point of artist and artisan, commerce and culture, industry and inspiration. Is a watch a medium of cultural expression, or a mechanical object created to calibrate the passage of time? As this issue shows, it is both.

Melanie Gerlis's excellent essay (see p80) explains how auction houses are using watch auctions as a gateway drug to hook collectors on high art, while support offered to cultural institutions by an increasingly culturally aware watch industry is more important than ever. Another Melanie, Melanie Grant, interviews our cover star, Cynthia Erivo (see p40), and finds out how an understanding of time and timepieces is central to interpreting the roles she so memorably inhabits.

I also urge you to read Nazanin Lankarani's commendably concise history of the artist's watch (see p76), which provides valuable context for the many collaborations that decorate the current watchscape and comes with a handy timeline that charts the development of this trope.

One of the most ambitious cultural initiatives by a watchmaker is Rolex's Mentor and Protégé programme, which connects cultural leaders (David Hockney, Anish Kapoor, David Adjaye, Spike Lee and Phyllida Lloyd, *inter alia*) with up-and-comers to transmit the insight accrued during a lifetime of cultural activity… much as master watchmakers pass on their skills. It is our honour to welcome Margaret Atwood and Naomi Alderman to *Vanity Fair On Time* to write about the experience (see p50).

In these pages you will discover the rich symbiosis of high watchmaking and high culture. Kabuki theatre, Sichuan opera, ballet, film scores, chamber music, Pop art and classical architecture are just a few of the diverse cultural phenomena to inspire watchmakers.

Culture is what makes us human; it is the way we mark our fleeting presence on the enormity of eternity. Watches are the tiny ticking machines that we wear next to our skin to remind us that *tempus fugit*.

NICHOLAS FOULKES, *Editor*

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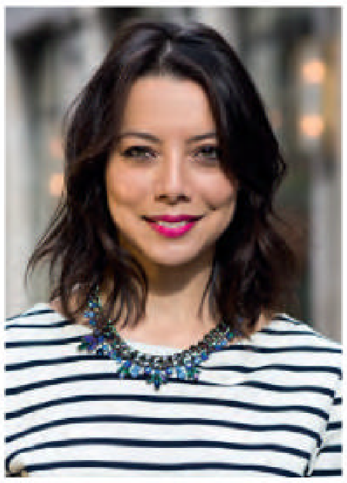
Danny Kasirye



VIGNERON: JEAN-FRANÇOIS ROBERT. KASIRYE: CYNTHIA ERIVO. BOS: PATRICK SWIRC. PARKER: CANDACE LAKE. CHO: EDWARD CHAN.

Cyrille VIGNERON

"TIME SIGNATURE", P. 48

French-born Cyrille Vigneron is a graduate of ESCP in Paris and was appointed president and CEO of Cartier in 2016. Prior to this he was managing director of Cartier Japan and president of Richemont Japan. In this issue he examines the crossover between horology and high culture.

Kim PARKER

"WATCHES OF THE YEAR", P. 68

London-based journalist Kim Parker—who makes her pick of the year's finest new métiers d'art timepieces—specialises in the luxury industry, with a focus on jewellery and watches. Her work has appeared in *Harper's Bazaar*, *Town & Country*, *The Telegraph*, *The Times* and *Condé Nast Traveller*.

Danny KASIRYE

"CASE OF STEEL", P. 40

Danny Kasirye, who shot our cover portrait for this issue, is a Ugandan-British photographer and director from London. Switching from a finance degree to film studies before beginning his first year, his background in film influences the way he approaches forming a still image.

Mark CHO

"CLASS ACT", P. 61

Writing for us on kabuki-influenced watches, Mark Cho is the co-founder of The Armoury, a group of classic menswear stores in Hong Kong and New York, and the co-owner of British menswear brand Drake. He is well known in the watch world as a collector, writer, researcher and collaborator.

Nicolas BOS

"THE RITE OF MAINSPRING", P. 46

The president and CEO of Van Cleef & Arpels since 2013, Nicolas Bos writes on the maison's enduring relationship with the medium of dance. Bos made his debut with the Richemont Group in 1992, when he joined the Cartier Foundation for Contemporary Art; he moved to Van Cleef & Arpels in 2000.

Melanie GRANT

"CASE OF STEEL", P. 40

A journalist for more than 20 years before she began her new role as executive director of the Responsible Jewellery Council in 2023, Melanie Grant interviews *On Time*'s cover star this issue, Cynthia Erivo. Her book on high jewellery, *Coveted*, was published by Phaidon in 2020.

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STOPWATCH

I COULD NOT LET 2023 pass without marking the 30th anniversary of the Royal Oak Offshore. I remember it very well, because when I first saw it, I knew I had to buy it. My reason was that I thought it was simply too big and too over the top to catch on; my fear was that it would be discontinued before I could get hold of one… So much for my ability to read the room and predict the future. Nevertheless, for much of the 1990s I barely saw another—then suddenly they were everywhere. The man who has to assume a lot of responsibility for that is departing Audemars Piguet CEO François-Henry Bennahmias, who at the time was the regional manager in the United States. He had heard that the rapper Jay-Z was wearing a Royal Oak. A mutual friend bought Mr Z to see Mr B and they decided to make limited-edition watches. After that it was a matter of getting HQ on board, as Bennahmias wrote in this magazine on the Offshore's 20th anniversary. He likened Jay-Z's oeuvre to an earlier musical movement. "At that time hip-hop was like jazz in the '20s and '30s: it started in the African-American community and then went mainstream. Which was exactly what happened to hip-hop: it was a major musical style and would open a new type of eyes to our brand." The rest, as they (whoever they are) say, is watchmaking history. ■ *N.F.*

Jay-Z wearing his Royal Oak Offshore at the O2 Wireless Festival, 2008.

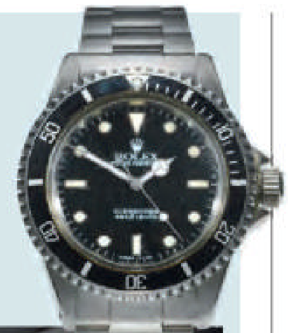
GARETH CATTERMOLE/GETTY IMAGES.

By Simon de Burton

Going, Going, STRONG

The winning bids from around the globe, plus watches owned by the last emperor of China, a Qatari prince and fashion royalty

Screen STAR



Bonhams has consigned one of the most covetable watches in cinema history—the Rolex Submariner that appears on the wrist of Vanessa Redgrave (*pictured*) in Michelangelo Antonioni's cult 1966 film *Blow-Up*. Redgrave wears the watch over her cuff on a distinctive bund strap. It was bought from the production team by a member of the camera crew, who is expected to reap up to £30,000 when it crosses the block in London on June 23.

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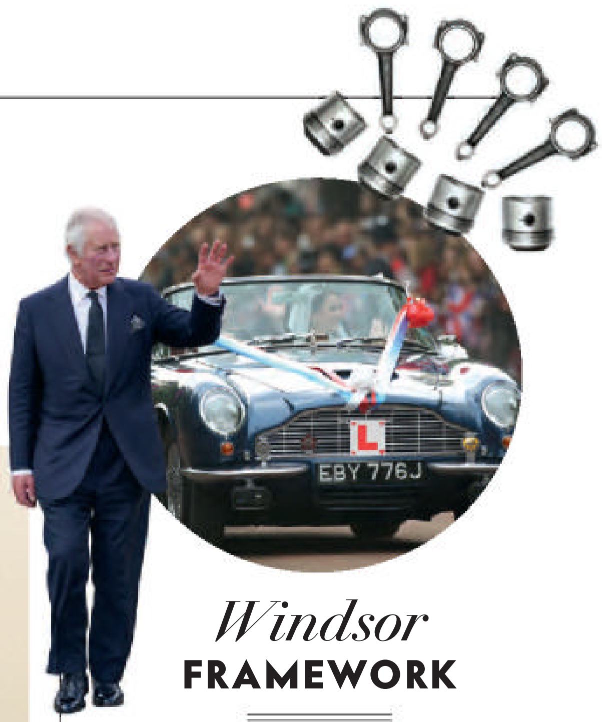
REGIMENTAL HONOURS

■ **THIS TUDOR PELAGOS** was one of 80 examples commissioned last year to commemorate the 80th anniversary of the British Army's elite Parachute Regiment, aka the Red Berets. The 42mm titanium and steel chronometer sold at Sotheby's London in February, along with a red beret and a regimental belt. It realised £53,340—10 times what was expected.

Straight from the Top

Modern classic watches don't come much more desirable than this Richard Mille RM 012, which was accompanied by a signed letter from Richard Mille (the man) explaining that it was the first of three prototypes built. The movement is a tubular construction mounted to the case. Estimated to fetch up to £450,000, it finally fell under the hammer at Sotheby's London in February for £609,600.

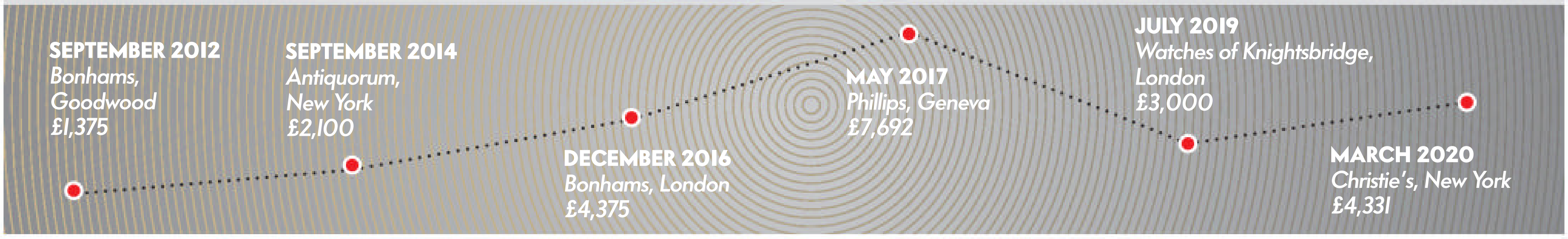


Windsor FRAMEWORK

A set of four pistons salvaged from the Aston Martin DB6 Vantage Volante given to King Charles (*pictured*) on his 21st birthday in 1969 are being made into desk clocks to raise funds for the Prince's Trust charity in auctions throughout the year. The clocks are manufactured by TMB Art Metal, a British firm that specialises in repurposing components from notable cars, aircraft and boats by incorporating them into decorative items. The pistons became surplus when the King's Aston Martin was converted to run on bioethanol fuel.

HERO WATCH *Heuer Camaro*

With the spotlight shining on the 60th anniversary of TAG Heuer's celebrated Carrera driver's chronograph, now is a good time to hunt for its overlooked cousin, the Camaro. Introduced in 1968, six years after the Autavia and five after the Carrera, the Camaro sought to capitalise on America's growing trend for so-called muscle cars, which began in 1964 with the launch of the Ford Mustang. Although a relatively small car by American standards, the Mustang could be had with a variety of powerful V8 engines, some of which endowed it with above average muscle. Keen to grow the business in the United States, Jack Heuer decided to capitalise on the success of the Camaro car—which had enjoyed huge publicity after being chosen as the Indianapolis pace car in 1967—and adopted the Camaro name for a cushion-cased driver's chronograph. Smaller than the Autavia, larger than the Carrera, and only available with Valjoux hand-wound movements, the 37mm cushion-cased Camaro was produced for just four years before being dropped from the range. Despite its short production run, several dial configurations were available (some with three registers, some with two) as well as gold and gold-plated versions. Our price chart relates to steel models only.



ASTON MARTIN: JULIAN FINNEY/GETTY IMAGES. KING CHARLES III: YUI MOK/WPA POOL/GETTY IMAGES. PARACHUTE REGIMENT: CBW/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO. PISTONS: TMB ART METAL. VANESSA REDGRAVE: STEVE SCHAPIRO/CORBIS VIA GETTY IMAGES. WATCHES: BONHAMS; SOTHEBY'S.

PIAGET
POSSESSION COLLECTION

Belles de JOURNE

The largest-ever thematic auction devoted to watches by François-Paul Journe will be staged by Christie's Geneva on May 12. The sale, which comprises 40 examples of landmark models by the highly regarded independent maker, will include one of 20 platinum-cased "pre-souscription" tourbillons produced after his manufacture was established in 1999 and a platinum Tourbillon Souverain with a jade dial—each could realise up to £880,000. Other rarities include a Centigraphe Souverain with a "Ferrari red" dial and a platinum, green dial Chronomètre Souverain marking the opening of the first F.P.Journe boutique in Dubai in 2019.

Quite a Talley

NINE WATCHES OWNED by the late fashion journalist André Leon Talley (*pictured*) fetched more than £33,000 between them in an estate sale held by Christie's in February. A Dior Christal watch fetched £5,800 and others designed for Tiffany by Paloma Picasso and Jean Schlumberger sold for £3,165 and £3,695 respectively. The top-selling watch, which realised £6,860, was a Jacob & Co "The World is Yours" model with a map of the globe made from coloured stones.

To Be PRECISE

Omega's new Speedmaster Super Racing is said to be accurate to a margin of "zero to plus two seconds per day", while Rolex Superlative Chronometers run to plus/minus two seconds. But the Longines Ultra-Chron matched that way back in 1967, to be dubbed "the world's most accurate watch". This example, sold by Dr Crott in November, was even more precise—accurate to a remarkable 0.6 seconds daily—having been "tuned" by owner Yvo Simioni when he was a watchmaking student in La Chaux-de-Fonds. It realised just £1,900.

TAKING AIM

An unusual gun camera watch supplied to the Royal Air Force during the 1950s fetched a modest £700 when it appeared among a selection of military timepieces sold by Watches of Knightsbridge in London in November. The small IWC Mark II watch was of a type fitted to aircraft-borne, gun-mounted cameras that were trigger-activated and used both for pilot training purposes and to confirm "kills".

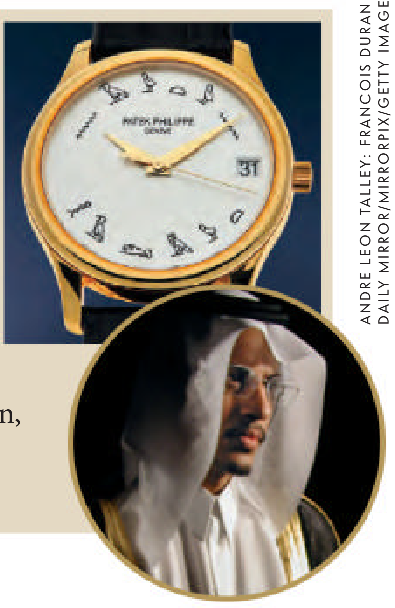
Time to REBEL

A prototype Rebellion Re-Volt Valtteri Bottas, owned and worn by the Formula 1 racing driver (*pictured*), was hammered down for £127,500 at Antiquorum, Geneva in January—and the buyer got a Bottas-signed race helmet thrown in. Rebellion, which sponsors the Alfa Romeo team, used the prototype to develop a 50-piece edition in the Finnish driver's colours. Each had a crystal carrying his signature and a piece of material from his car's bodywork attached to the carbon case.

ANDRE LEON TALLEY: FRANCOIS DURAND/GETTY IMAGES. GOLFERS: COMSTOCK/GETTY IMAGES. PATEK PHILIPPE GIFTS: SOTHEBY'S. PLANE: HEANLY/ DAILY MIRROR/MIRRORPIX/GETTY IMAGES. SAUD BIN MUHAMMED AL THANI: BENJAMIN PIETRO FILARDO. SWISS FLAG: GEORGE CLERK/GETTY IMAGES. VALTERRI BOTTAS: ANTIQUORUM. WATCHES: ANTIQUORUM; CHRISTIE'S; DR CROTT AUCTIONEERS; PHILLIPS; WATCHES OF KNIGHTSBRIDGE.

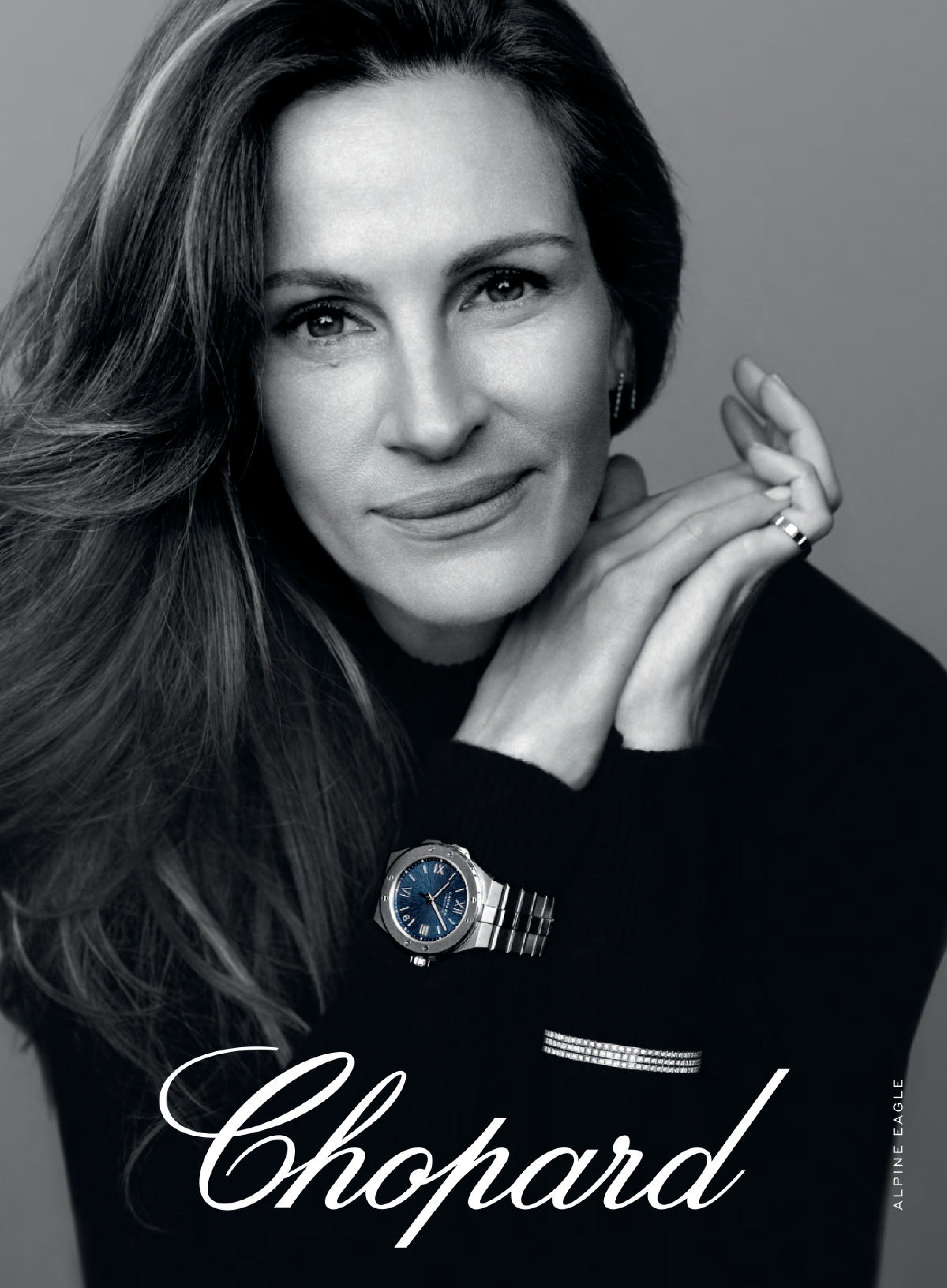
HIERO PURCHASE

This Patek Philippe Reference 3998 was commissioned in 2002 by the late Qatari prince Saud bin Muhammed Al Thani (*pictured*), with a unique dial marked with Egyptian hieroglyphs spelling out the name Halmut Nautun—leading to the conclusion the watch was intended as a gift for the German photographer Helmut Newton who, for reasons unknown, never received it. It fetched £198,000 at Phillips New York in December.



Par for the COURSE

A TELESCOPIC UMBRELLA, a golf bag, a lambswool rug and a magnifying glass were among a selection of 20 Patek Philippe-branded corporate gifts that realised more than £31,000 between them when they were offered by Sotheby's in an online auction in February. The haul was highlighted by a 20-slot watch box that fetched £6,985, with a pair of Calatrava cross cufflinks going for £3,556 and a box of three golf balls making £254. Such items are typically given to authorised dealers as "incentives".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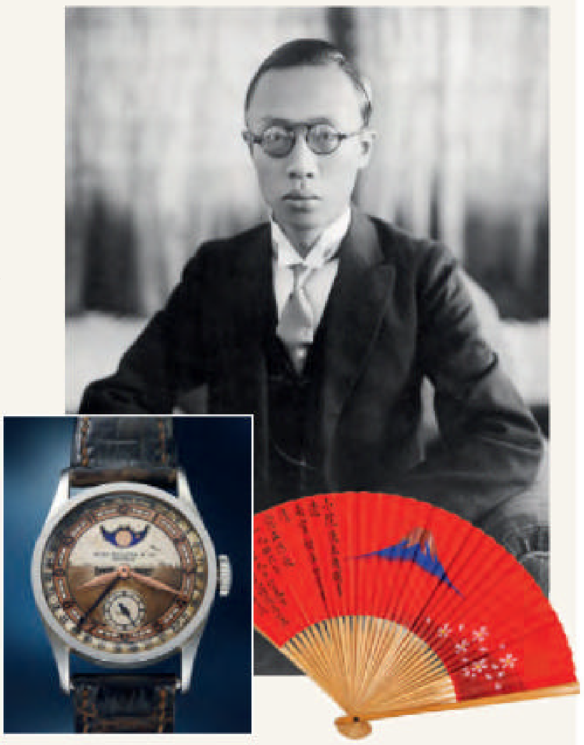
ALPINE EAGLE

Fit for a QING



A platinum Patek Philippe wristwatch that belonged to Aisin-Gioro Puyi (*pictured*), the last emperor of China and the Qing dynasty, is set to fetch more than $2m when it will be offered later this year. One of just three examples known of a Reference 96 Quantième Lune, it was among a suitcase full of treasures that Puyi had with him when he abdicated in August 1945 prior to being captured by the Soviet Red Army and sent to detention camps in Khabarovsk, less than 20 miles from the Chinese border. During five years of incarceration he became friendly with Soviet interpreter Georgy Permyakov, to whom he gave the watch prior to Stalin sanctioning Puyi's extradition to the People's Republic of China in 1950. Famously cruel to his servants—he particularly enjoyed flogging eunuchs—Puyi is said to have once ordered his trusted servant "Big Li" to determine whether the dial of the watch was made from platinum by scratching off half of its paint. Hence the tatty two-tone effect.

Dial TONES

Just a year ago Christie's Geneva hammered down an as-new Rolex Oyster Perpetual 36 with an in-demand turquoise dial for £61,500, a remarkable 1,177 per cent more than the official retail price of the watch at launch in 2020. At the same sale, the house achieved £44,900 for a coral-red example, but prices have since dropped back considerably, with Dr Crott selling an unworn turquoise model at its November sale for £14,375 and a pastel pink one for £8,820. The prices are still way above Rolex's RRP of £5,100, but it does look as though sanity is returning to the market.

AUCTION CALENDAR

Summer 2023

May	
10	Dreweatts, *Newbury*
10-14	Phillips, *Geneva*
11	Bonhams, *London*
13-14	Antiquorum, *Geneva*
13-15	Christie's, *Geneva*
14	Sotheby's, *Geneva*
18	Fellows, *Birmingham*
20	Dr Crott, *Cologne*
20	Watches of Knightsbridge, *London*
24	Gardiner Houlgate, *Bath*
24-29	Phillips, *Hong Kong*
26	Christie's, *Hong Kong*
26	Bonhams, *Paris*
27-28	Antiquorum, *Hong Kong*
June	
7	Christie's, *New York*
9	Sotheby's, *New York*
10-11	Phillips, *New York*
21	Bonhams, *London*
23	Antiquorum, *Forte dei Marmi*
28	Gardiner Houlgate, *Bath*
July	
13	Fellows, *Birmingham*
September	
13	Bonhams, *London*
20	Antiquorum, *Hong Kong*

Thanks a MILLION

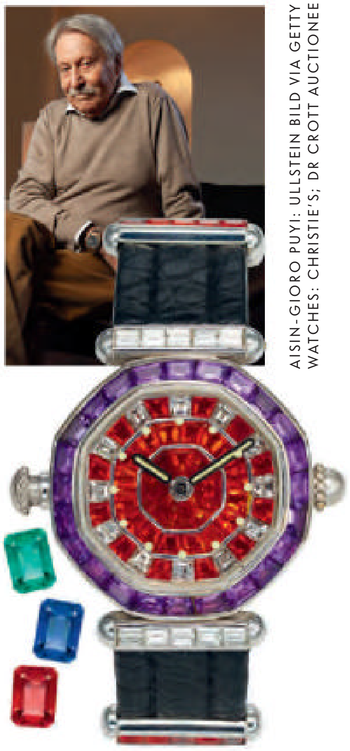
■ A UNIQUE OCTA Automatic with a one-off purple dial donated by watchmaker F.P.Journe raised £890,000 at a gala dinner organised by the Swiss anti-paedophilia charity Action Innocence in February. At a single-owner Phillips online sale in January, 11 F.P.Journe watches fetched a total of £2,447,000 between them, highlights being a unique Sonnerie Souveraine minuter repeater that sold for £918,000 and a dual-time Chronomètre à Résonance that fetched £287,000.

Over the Moon

■ A RARE OMEGA Speedmaster that was issued to Nasa in October 1968 but missed out on being sent to the moon fetched £273,400, double its estimate, when it crossed the block at Phillips New York in December. The watch was only the second of its type stamped with a Nasa serial number to have appeared at auction. Instead of being sent on a live mission, it was used for Apollo, Skylab and Space Shuttle land-based exercises.

Chosen Few

The late Gérald Genta (*pictured*) was well known for creating landmark watches such as the Patek Philippe Nautilus and the Audemars Piguet Royal Oak, but he also produced bespoke designs under his own name. Typical of such watches was this 1990s one-off, Success, which measures 34mm in diameter and is encrusted with diamonds and sapphires. The pushpiece at 9 o'clock activates a minute-repeater mechanism, and a transparent caseback reveals the elaborately decorated movement. The watch sold for £105,000 at Christie's New York in November—probably a fraction of the original cost.



AISIN-GIORO PUYI: ULLSTEIN BILD VIA GETTY IMAGES. FAN: PHILLIPS. GEMS: STUDIO492/SHUTTERSTOCK. GERALD GENTA: DAVE YODER. WATCHES: CHRISTIE'S; DR CROTT AUCTIONEERS; F.P.JOURNE; PHILLIPS.

RICHARD MILLE

RICHARD MILLE
CRMA8
H
N
W
SWISS MADE

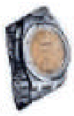
RM 07-04

In-house skeletonised automatic winding calibre
50-hour power reserve (± 10%)
Baseplate and bridges in grade 5 titanium
Function selector
Shock-resistant to 5000 g's
36 grams including Velcro® strap
Case in Quartz TPT®

A Racing Machine
On The Wrist

AUCTIONEERS' *Top Tips*

Buy, Sell, Hold

		BUY		SELL		HOLD	
Jonathan Darracott Bonhams, London		Mid-range vintage chronographs by Tudor, Heuer and IWC		Patek Philippe Nautilus, gem-set Rolex and F.P.Journe		Modern complications by Audemars Piguet, Patek Philippe and IWC	
Benoît Colson Sotheby's, Paris		Neo-vintage Patek with special dials, especially complicated references		Early Daniel Roth and regular production pieces by A. Lange & Söhne		Vintage Longines chronographs and Patek Philippe Nautilus Ref. 5711	
Paul Boutros Phillips, New York		Stainless-steel Patek Philippe Nautilus and vintage Rolex Daytona		Brand new Rolex sports models		Audemars Piguet Royal Oak, all references	
Stefan Muser Dr Crott, Mannheim		Perfect condition vintage Rolex with full-set box, manuals and papers		Watches in mediocre condition, almost regardless of what they are. Condition is all-important today		Patek Philippe Nautilus and Audemars Piguet Royal Oak	
Laura Bishop Fellows, Birmingham		Vintage Rolex Submariner, Explorer and Daytona in original condition		Modern Audemars Piguet, including Millenary and less common models		Military watches such as Dirty Dozen and German Luftwaffe models	
Toby Sutton Watches of Knightsbridge, London		Vintage Cartier—the demand far outweighs the supply		Mid-century modern watches		1980s and 1990s perpetual calendars by Vacheron Constantin, Audemars Piguet and Patek Philippe	
Julien Schaerer Antiquorum, Geneva		Pocket watches, vintage Rolex sport watches and bracelet wristwatches, Patek Philippe Ref. 3970 and 5004		Audemars Piguet Royal Oak and all modern Rolex sport models		Patek Philippe Aquanaut and Nautilus, all models	
Alexandre Bigler Christie's, Hong Kong		Hand-crafted watches with enamelling, engraving and wood marquetry		Vintage masterpiece wrist and pocket watches by leading makers		Audemars Piguet Royal Oak models	

Look, NO HANDS

■ **IF YOU LIKE** your timekeepers minimal, an Hourglass Blue Edition conceived by Marc Newson might appeal. Made by watch brand De Bethune to Newson's specifications, the six-kilo one-off was filled with stainless-steel nanoballs developed by watchmaker Denis Flageollet to create a "nuanced shade recalling the signature blue of French artist Yves Klein". This veritable load of balls realised £36,800 at Phillips New York in December, with the proceeds going to the Swiss Institute, the city's non-profit contemporary art organisation.

Radiating Style

Breitling formed a partnership with British luxury car maker Bentley in 2001 that lasted for 20 years, but more than half a century earlier it made this impressive clock for Rolls-Royce that cropped up at Antiquorum's Monaco auction in January. The clock's silver case takes the familiar form of a Royce radiator surround, complete with Spirit of Ecstasy mascot and vertical air vents. Powered by an eight-day movement and offered in its original, box, the rarity sold for £3,200.

MAN OF THE WORLD

■ **SONOROUS HOLLYWOOD STAR** Robert Stack (*pictured*) was the original owner of this 1939 Patek Philippe World Time wristwatch, which is believed to the second one produced by the maker. Stack, who owned the watch until his death in 2003 aged 84, found fame in films such as *The Untouchables* and *Written on the Wind*—but is perhaps best remembered for playing Captain Rex Kramer in the 1980 disaster spoof *Airplane!* The watch sold for £126,000 at Phillips New York in December.

BREITLING CLOCK: ANTIQUORUM. DE BETHUNE: PHILLIPS. ROBERT STACK: EVERETT COLLECTION INC/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO. PATEK PHILIPPE WATCH: PHILLIPS. BUY, HOLD, SELL PORTRAITS AND WATCHES: ANTIQUORUM; BONHAMS; CHRISTIE'S IMAGES LIMITED 2023; DR. CROTT AUCTIONEERS; FELLOWS AUCTIONEERS; PHILLIPS; SOTHEBY'S; WATCHES OF KNIGHTSBRIDGE.

TUDOR

#BORN TODARE

What is it that drives someone to greatness? To take on the unknown, venture into the unseen and dare all? This is the spirit that gave birth to TUDOR. This is the spirit embodied by every TUDOR Watch. Some are born to follow. Others are born to dare.

41 millimetre case in 316L stainless steel

Snowflake hands A hallmark of TUDOR divers' watches since 1969

Manufacture Calibre MT5602-U with 70-hour "weekend-proof" power-reserve, silicon hair-spring, COSC-certification and Master Chronometer Certification from METAS

Five-year transferable guarantee with no registration or periodic maintenance checks required

BLACK BAY

By Barbara Palumbo

COLLABORATIONS

HUBLOT
HUBLOT

Famed Japanese contemporary artist Takashi Murakami (*above*) has once again joined forces with **Hublot** by presenting to the public 13 unique timepieces alongside 13 new NFTs. Their latest collaboration, which was introduced at an event at the Glass House in New York City, is quite a bit different from their prior joint projects. “When my collaboration with Hublot was announced, we made it known that we would be adopting new forms of artistic expression,” said Murakami. “After creating all the timepieces together, as well as the digital works of art, we are now imagining new ways of accessing contemporary art.” The event in New York was made even more special as Hublot invited members of the press to celebrate Murakami’s birthday at a private dinner in the evening prior to the official release.

IWC Schaffhausen and e-commerce menswear powerhouse Mr Porter have once again collaborated on a limited-edition pilot timepiece. The IWC Big Pilot’s 43 Mr Porter Edition 1 is limited to 500 pieces and was crafted in a 43mm brushed-bronze case and black dial. The watch is equipped with the Swiss-made calibre 82100 automatic movement, which comes with a 60-hour power reserve and is water-resistant to 10 bar. As with previous collaborations between the two labels, the watch, which takes design inspiration from early “observation watches”, is available on the Mr Porter website.

English-based **Bamford Watch Department** and watch collector community RedBar Group issued the RedBar x Bamford B347 LE in February, limited to 100 pieces. According to RedBar CEO Kathleen McGivney, the collaboration was an off-the-cuff idea during discussions between McGivney and George Bamford ahead of Watches and Wonders 2022. The watch is powered by a Sellita SW510 MP c automatic movement, which boasts a 62-hour power reserve and was designed in RedBar’s traditional colours of black, white and red.

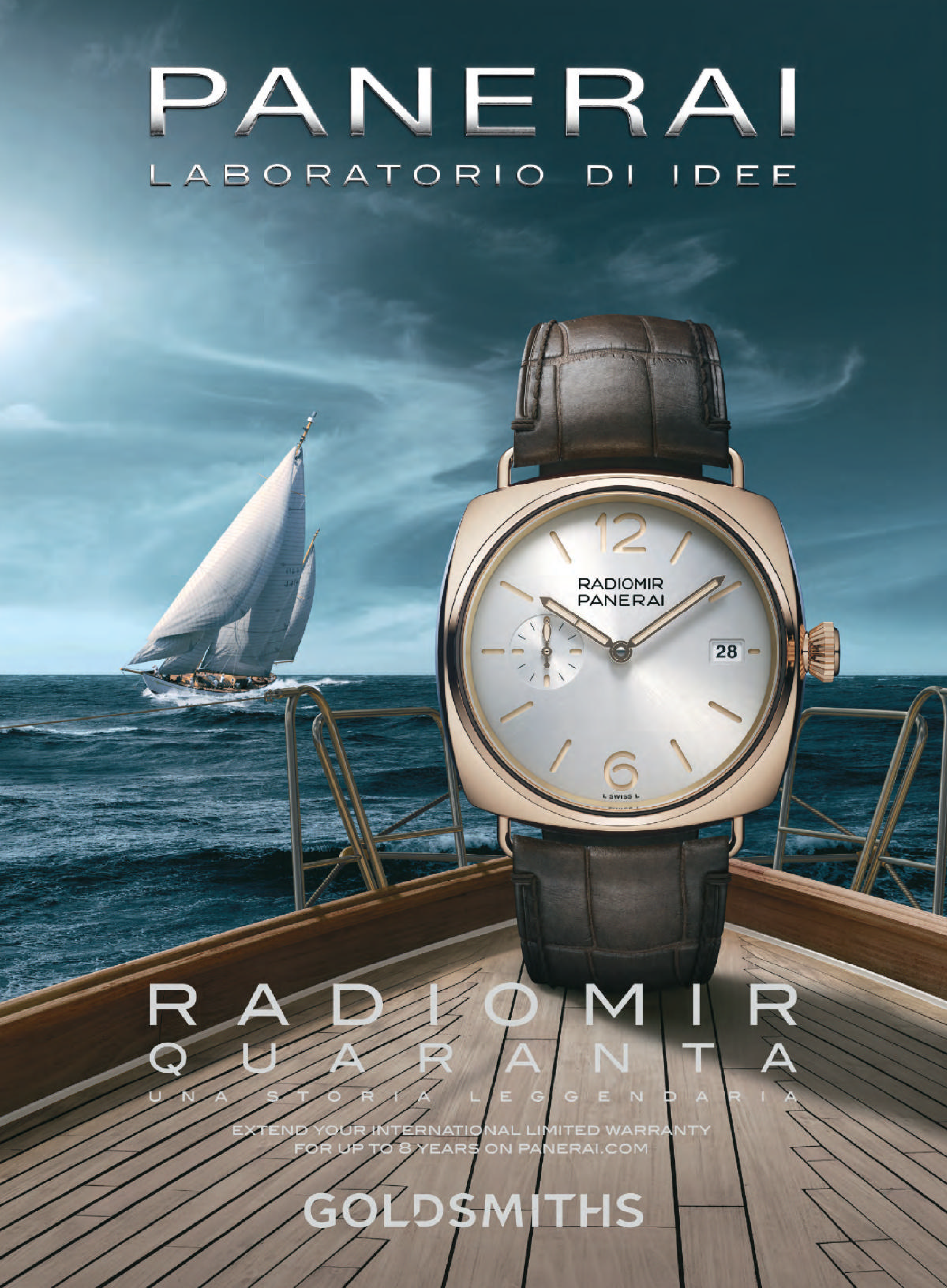
Corum released the one-of-a-kind Bubble 47 Central Tourbillon alongside watch customisation outfit Label Noir this year in association with Macau Master of Time. The annual event—a showcase of fine watches and uniquely crafted jewels—features more than 330 items from over 40 maisons, including bespoke pieces created exclusively to be exhibited. The recognisable customisation accents of Label Noir are apparent in this collaboration as it features the colours of black and acid green, as well as textured finishes and matt tones, while maintaining the distinct appearance of the late Severin Wunderman’s Bubble design created for Corum.

In celebration of **G-Shock**’s 40th anniversary, the Casio-owned watch company teamed up for a second time with streetwear brand Bodega to release the new DW5600 “Anytime & Anywhere” wristwatch. Crafted in smoky grey translucent resin, the watch’s strap and case play nicely off of the face, which includes the co-branding signature in custom script, accentuated with blue and red trim. But as G-Shock collectors are aware, looks aren’t everything. The watch also offers shock resistance, is able to be worn in water down to 200m, has an EL backlight afterglow, 1/100-second stopwatch and a countdown timer.

TOUR DE FORCE

After successful runs in Dubai (2012), Munich (2013), London (2015), New York (2017) and Singapore (2019) attracting about 165,000 visitors in total, **Patek Philippe**’s Grande Exhibition tour moves to Tokyo for 2023. The event will take over the Sumitomo Sankaku Hiroba, an all-weather event space located among the towers of the Nishi-Shinjuku business district. As with the previous exhibitions, the space will be divided into 10 themed areas, taking visitors through the history and development of Patek Philippe. The areas will include imagery and information about the brand’s most renowned Geneva sites, including its headquarters in the rue du Rhône, the manufacture at Plan-les-Ouates and the Patek Philippe Museum.

JAPAN: JACKY JOY PHOTOGRAPHY/ GETTY IMAGES. HUBLOT. PATEK PHILIPPE.


PANERAI
LABORATORIO DI IDEE
RADIOMIR
PANERAI
28
SWISS
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QUARANTA
UNA STORIA LEGGENDARIA
EXTEND YOUR INTERNATIONAL LIMITED WARRANTY
FOR UP TO 8 YEARS ON PANERAI.COM
GOLDSMITHS

AMBASSADORS

Academy Award and Bafta-winning American actress Jennifer Lawrence (*below*) is the latest celebrity to join the growing family of **Longines** ambassadors, which already includes actors Regé-Jean Page and Kate Winslet. "Jennifer has the ability to imbue every character she plays with reality and authenticity, and off-screen this translates into an elegance that is both natural and relatable," said Longines CEO Matthias Breschan. "She is an inspiration to girls and women of all ages and we are proud to welcome her to the Longines family." Ms Lawrence, a native of Kentucky (the state that plays host to the Kentucky Derby, which the brand sponsors) was equally positive about the alliance. "Longines is rooted in a legacy of innovation and quality trusted by some of history's greatest trailblazers," said Lawrence. "I am thrilled to join the Longines family and look forward to our partnership in the years ahead."

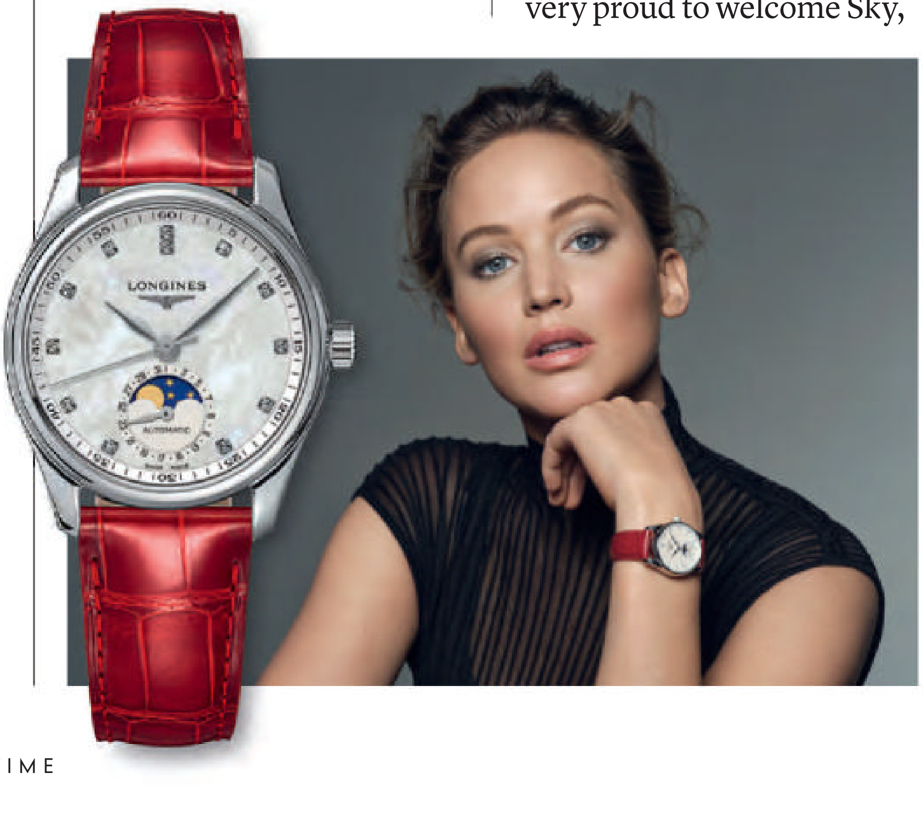
Multiple Paralympic gold medallist Richard Whitehead was introduced as the newest ambassador for **Seiko**'s Prospex line of watches. Whitehead developed a passion for sport from an early age, even with his double through-knee congenital amputation. Driven by a desire to compete, he set world records in the full and half marathon categories.

Rebellion Timepieces has announced that retired Brazilian football star Ronaldinho will be joining its team as a brand ambassador, and that the company will create a special watch for the sporting legend as well as one for his son, João Mendes, who recently signed with FC Barcelona. "I was particularly touched by the great care the team at Rebellion has put into creating these two watches, my son's and mine, which we will be presenting together soon," said Ronaldinho after a visit to the manufacture in Switzerland. "It is a joy to be part of the Rebellion Timepieces team and I am already looking forward to my role as an ambassador for the brand worldwide."

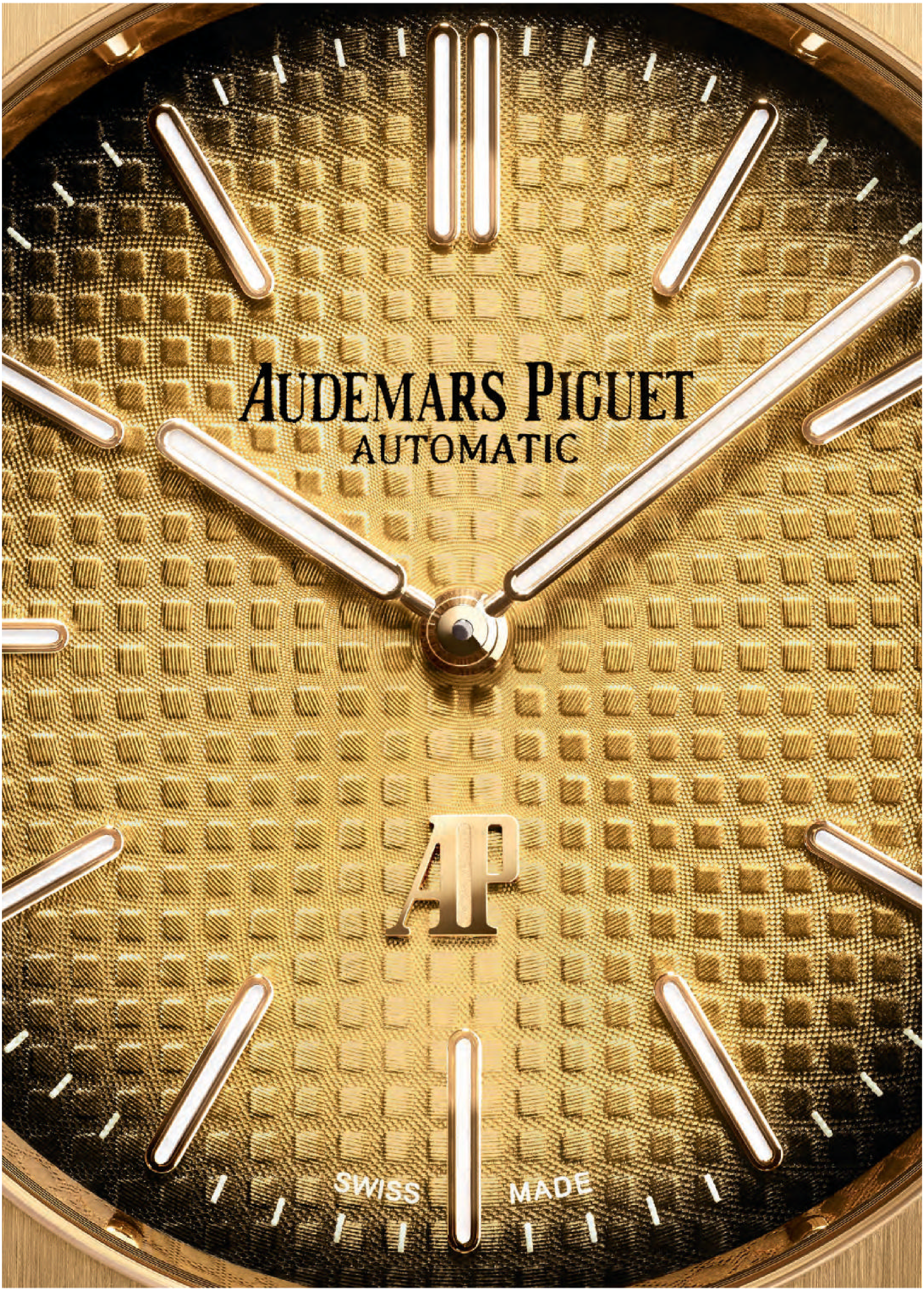
French racing driver Lilou Wadoux was introduced recently as the latest **Richard Mille** partner. The young racing prodigy is the first official female Ferrari Competizioni GT driver. Aged 21, Wadoux drove brilliantly for the Richard Mille Racing Team during her final FIA World Endurance Championship season in the LMP2 category in 2022. "Lilou is only at the start of her career, but she is already writing a new page in the history of motor racing by joining Ferrari as an official driver in endurance," said Amanda Mille, Richard Mille brand and partnerships director. "There still remains a lot of work, but we will remain at her side to help her reach the top step of the podium."

British-Japanese skateboarding and surfing sensation Sky Brown (*above*) is **TAG Heuer**'s latest—and youngest—brand ambassador. The multi-talented boarder picked up a bronze medal at the Tokyo Olympics at the age of 13, making her the youngest medallist in Great Britain's history. "We are very proud to welcome Sky, our youngest ambassador, to the TAG Heuer family," said Frédéric Arnault, TAG Heuer CEO. "Our shared passion for high performance and the avant-garde made this a natural match. We look forward to supporting her in the years to come and on her Olympic journey."

Hublot reported that New York-based contemporary artist Daniel Arsham would come on board with the brand as its newest ambassador. Arsham has previously collaborated with the Japanese illustrator Hajime Sorayama and the fashion designer Hedi Slimane, and released an animated short for the *Pokémon* franchise that was screened at the Nanzuka Underground gallery in Tokyo in 2022. To celebrate the partnership, Arsham unveiled a temporary sundial, made from snow and ice and measuring 20 metres across, in the Swiss mountain town of Zermatt. The installation, *Light and Time*, uses natural elements as a way to link timekeeping and land art. The sundial echoes Hublot's design aesthetic, integrating recognisable characteristics of the Big Bang watch.



TAG HEUER. LONGINES.


AUDEMARS PIGUET
AUTOMATIC
AP
SWISS
MADE

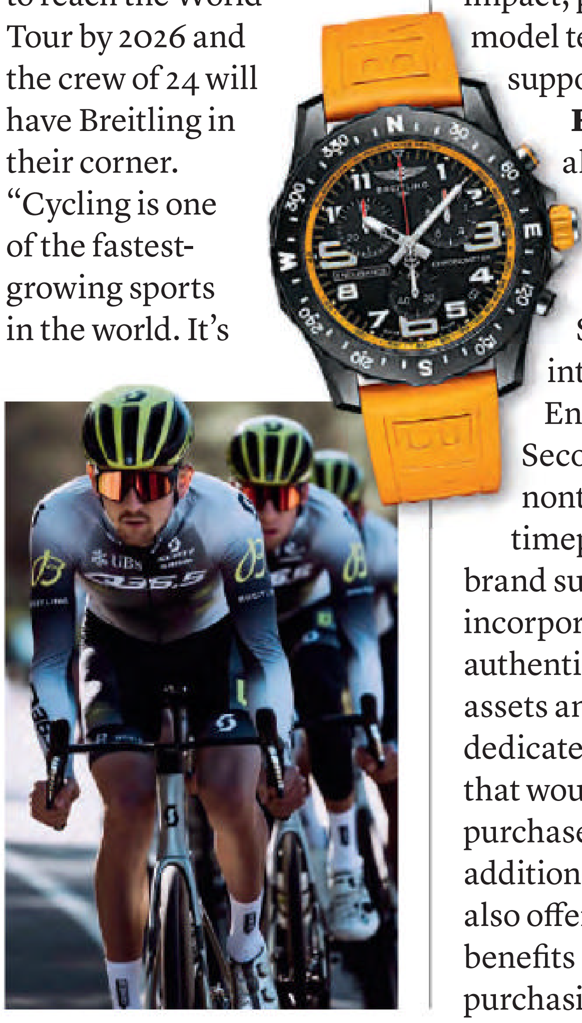
PARTNERSHIPS

Ulysse Nardin was named the official timekeeping partner of the 14th iteration of the Ocean Race, a multi-leg nautical competition that features two classes of ultra-high performance ocean-going yachts: the Imoca class (International Monohull Open Class Association) and the VO65 class. The former will sail more than 32,000 nautical miles around the world for the Ocean Race trophy, while the latter will need to accumulate the highest score across three different legs of the race in order to win the Ocean Race VO65 Sprint Cup. “The sea has always been part of our world,” said Ulysse Nardin CEO Patrick Pruniaux, “and exploration has always been our spearhead.” Additionally, as the Time to Act partner of the Ocean Race, Ulysse Nardin is committed to supporting the responsible use and conservation of the world’s oceans.

Keen to further its commitment to the sport of professional cycling, **Tudor** has announced its role as the official timekeeper of the Giro d’Italia, one of the most prestigious Grand Tours in the professional cycling circuit. The Giro d’Italia is often referred to in the cycling community as the most exciting race event on the calendar, as well as one of the most difficult. Additionally, Tudor is the official timekeeper of the entire RCS Sport family of cycling races including the Classic Milano-Sanremo, Il Lombardia and the famed Strade Bianche.

Audemars Piguet has recently partnered with Dreamscape on a virtual-reality experience entitled *The Clockwork Forest*. The limited-time, Geneva-based exhibit will allow participants the opportunity to enter a world deep inside the Vallée de Joux where nature and technical complexity meet. They will have the mission of restoring the course of time before the irreversible disruption of nature occurs.

Known for its sponsorship of major cycling events over the years, **Breitling** has opted for the first time to partner as a sponsor with a professional cycling team. The Q36.5 Pro Cycling Team (*below*), which is newly founded by the Italian cycling apparel brand Q36.5, is on a mission to reach the World Tour by 2026 and the crew of 24 will have Breitling in their corner. “Cycling is one of the fastest-growing sports in the world. It’s also a big part of our history and we needed the right partner with a strong vision to carry this heritage into the future,” says Georges Kern, CEO of Breitling. “Q36.5 Pro Cycling Team, with its ambitions to perform at a world-class level while making a positive social and environmental impact, proved to be the model team to put our support behind.”

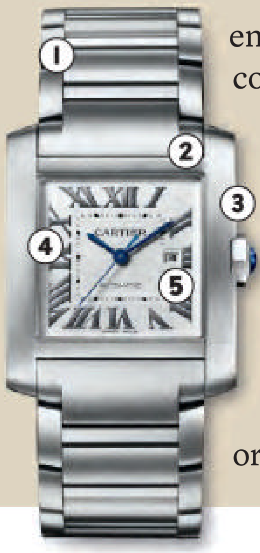


H. Moser & Cie, along with partners Aura Blockchain Consortium and Deloitte Switzerland, introduced the Endeavour Centre Seconds Genesis, a nontraditional timepiece (even for a brand such as Moser) that incorporates blockchain authentication, digital assets and access to a dedicated metaverse space that would enable purchasers to view additional products, while also offering them exclusive benefits such as priority purchasing opportunities.

MODERN CLASSIC: *Cartier Tank Française by Nicholas Foulkes*

You know you are getting old when the watches you remember being launched for the first time get revived as historic classics. The Tank Française was a huge deal at the time, described as “the first new Tank family since the 1930s to see the light of day”. The biggest break with the past was the integrated design of the case and distinctive metal bracelet **(1)**.

Spotting the differences between the 1990s and 2020s Tank Française requires sharp eyes. The case seems more massy, thanks to a single solid end link **(2)** replacing the former three-part construction where case and bracelet join. The crown **(3)** on the new model is seven-sided, although why heptagonal rather than octagonal eludes me. Further tweaking of the crown has left it partially countersunk into the case wall. Depending on model, some of the dials feature applied Roman numerals **(4)**; on those with printed dials the secret signature is at 10 o’clock. Elsewhere, the date window has moved from 6 o’clock on the original, to 3 o’clock **(5)** on the 21st-century version.



Q36.5 TEAM: GEORG LINDACHER. BEITLING. CARTIER.

1858 Iced Sea.
Inspired by
the Mont Blanc glaciers.
MONTBLANC
300m/1000ft
1858 Iced Sea
SWISS MADE
MONTBLANC

NEW BOUTIQUES

The Watches of Switzerland flagship store on Regent Street in London is now the home of **Zenith**'s first boutique in Britain. The location will have a variety of watches on hand from Zenith's newest collections, including the Zenith x Watches of Switzerland Chronomaster Original Limited Edition, a 100-piece edition of Zenith's popular chronograph that was manufactured specifically for the boutique's opening.

Rado has opened its first ever British boutique in partnership with Ernest Jones in the Merry Hill retail complex near Dudley. The space offers visitors a calm atmosphere surrounded by luxurious materials. "Rado, as a master of materials, is very happy to offer to our customers a premium retail experience to feel the difference of the Rado brand," said Rado CEO Adrian Bosshard of the new opening. The boutique is adjacent to the existing Ernest Jones location.

German watch manufacturer **A. Lange & Söhne** opened its eighth American boutique on Newbury Street in Boston, Massachusetts. The grand opening featured a cocktail reception followed by a private exhibition and dinner at the Boston Athenaeum, one of the country's oldest independent libraries, to which the brand had also made a donation. "As one of Germany's most traditional watch brands, we are thrilled to have found a new home in one of the most historically rich cities in the United States," said A. Lange & Söhne CEO Wilhelm Schmid.

Panerai has introduced its first stand-alone boutique in Ireland in partnership with Paul Sheeran Jewellers. The Dublin-based location is on Chatham Street, but the interior is quintessentially Italian, including the delightful Bar Italiano, which serves up an array of quality timepieces with a side of espresso and, when the hour is right, an aperitivo.

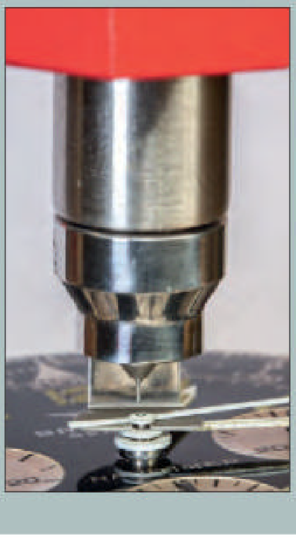
PANERAI
LUMINOR PANERAI

Geneva is the new home to a **Girard-Perregaux** boutique. Opened recently in conjunction with esteemed timepiece retailer Bucherer, the boutique is located at 1 Quai du Mont-Blanc, and showcases the manufacturer's complete collection, including novelties and limited editions. Visitors to the location are treated to an immersive experience where the décor, furniture and artworks reflect the history of the maison and the beauty of its surrounding landscape.

Roger Dubuis opened its first California boutique in the upscale South Coast Plaza in Orange County. The newest boutique is its second flagship location in the United States after Aspen, Colorado. Roger Dubuis CEO Nicola Andreatta was on hand for the ribbon-cutting earlier this year and guests were treated to champagne with a side order of "hyper horology."

TOOL TIME: ***Hand Lifter*** *by Justin Koullapis of The Watch Club*

Watch hands have a tiny pipe extending down into the movement. The pipe is pressed tightly onto a protruding arbor or tube, keeping the hand in place. Usually, when removing watch hands, the watchmaker can prise them up using tiny levers. These levers press against the dial, so sensible watchmakers protect it with a temporary plastic film. Sometimes the dial's finish is so precious that any contact with levers is forbidden. This is when the watchmaker turns to a more sophisticated method. This hand lifter has a delicate foot that slides under the hand and supports it from below. A slot provides clearance for the hand pipe. A choice of feet gives different width slots and different weights of foot. Meanwhile, a needle comes down from above. The watchmaker delicately advances this with a thumb screw on the tool. As the needle enters the central hole in the watch hand, it effectively presses the watch movement away from the hand. The beauty of this tool is that it uses gradual and controlled motion to ease off even the tightest hands, while making absolutely no contact with the all-important watch dial.



TOOL: JUSTIN KOULLAPIS. IRISH FLAG: POWEROFFOREVER/GETTY IMAGES. ZENITH. PANERAI.

Shinsu. A land of majestic nature.
A spring of constant inspiration for Grand Seiko.
Here, light and shadow are in dynamic harmony.
And Time flows in seamless motion.
Here, the *TAKUMI* infuse the essence of Nature into
each and every timepiece, bringing its true beauty to life.

THE NATURE OF TIME

Shinshu, Nagano Prefecture

GS
Grand Seiko
SPRING DRIVE
5 DAYS
DIVER'S 200m

GS
Grand Seiko

Evolution 9 Collection SLGA015 Spring Drive 5 Days Caliber 9RA5 Diver's 200m

grand-seiko.com

TOON TIME

Known for its laid-back take on watchmaking, the Italian-based brand **Unimatic** went one step further by releasing a watch that pays homage to the 25-year-old American animated sitcom *South Park*. Kenny would approve of the new Unimatic X South Park Modello Uno ref.U1-EC limited edition timepiece, even with his usual demise (fans of the show will understand). The watch's black aluminium bezel insert and matt white dial feature a colourful face showcasing a depiction of the show's Eric Cartman.

The new **Oris** ProPilot x Kermit Edition was introduced in March and has Oris watch collectors seeing green. As with previous editions of the ProPilot, the timepiece was created in titanium and is equipped with the calibre 400 movement, but the twist on this particular model is that Kermit the Frog (of both *Sesame Street* and *The Muppet Show* fame) appears in the date window on the first of every month, reminding the wearer not to take life too seriously.

Reservoir teamed up with Label Noir on the watch brand's second partnership with an iconic cartoon character in the last two years: the Reservoir X Label Noir X Popeye watch. Popeye (the Sailor Man) was first introduced as part of the Thimble Theatre comic series by EC Segar in 1929 and became one of the most recognisable cartoon characters of the 20th century. The 240° retrograde limited-edition timepiece features a minutes display on three-fourths of the surface, with Popeye's arm sweeping from 00 to 60 and then snapping back again at the top of each hour.

POPEYE
the
SAILORMAN
RESERVOIR

ANNIVERSARIES

Swatch is celebrating its Swatch Art Journey timepieces this year by offering five new capsule collections including (but not limited to) the Swatch X MoMA, in order to mark the centenary of Pop artist Roy Lichtenstein's birth, as well as the Swatch X Magritte in celebration of the surrealist painter's 125th anniversary. The collections are being released between March and May and will feature 10 delightfully creative pieces in all.

For the 70th anniversary of its iconic Fifty Fathoms diver's watch, **Blancpain** has introduced new timepieces as well as what the brand is calling "exclusive experiences". The first releases were introduced at the beginning of the year, starting with the new Fifty Fathoms 70th Anniversary Act—a 42.3mm self-winding watch with a unidirectional sapphire bezel and water-resistance of 30 bar—and following up with the Fifty Fathoms Act 2 Tech Gombessa; a 47mm monster of a diver's watch, which features a unidirectional three-hour scale bezel with black ceramic inlay tilted towards the dial. A future release is expected in the coming months.

Carl F. Bucherer celebrated 135 years in the watchmaking world this year with an all-black capsule collection containing variations of five of its most recognisable models. Three of the new watch designs were made in limited quantities; the remaining two—the Manero Flyback Black and the Heritage BiCompax Annual Black—will become part of the brand's permanent collection.

KERMIT THE FROG: © DISNEY. PALLETTE: GINO'S PREMIUM IMAGES/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO. POPEYE: SHAWSHOTS/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO. UNIMATIC/COMEDY PARTNERS. ORIS. RESERVOIR. SWATCH.

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THE TEXTURE OF TIME

Case of STEEL

Actress and singer Cynthia Erivo's career is a peerless blend of toughness and glamour, says *Melanie Grant*

IN THE OPENING scene of *Drift*, Cynthia Erivo as Jacqueline sits on a golden beach looking out to sea as turquoise waves lap the shore. She is on a picturesque Greek island in the 1990s and at first it feels like she must be on holiday within the narrative of a glossy blockbuster. Tourists throng around her joyfully in the sun but she walks blindly as if lost, disorientated, alone, avoiding the gaze of a passing policeman. The film is a searing account of Jacqueline's life as a Liberian refugee, experiencing both flashbacks of the terrors she has left behind, but also hope that she may find peace. In an emotional, spiritual and physical sense, Erivo is stripped bare in the role. There are no beautiful gowns, no flamboyant make-up and certainly no glittering watch adorns her slim wrist. This is as far away from the glamour of her phenomenal rise to Hollywood fame as it's possible to get—and she is masterful.

Time in the film—which she also produced—rolls slowly and is a languid method by which to heal and recover. Erivo first became aware of the concept of time in secondary school when she was rehearsing for school plays that seemed to stretch on indefinitely until, suddenly, they were at an end.

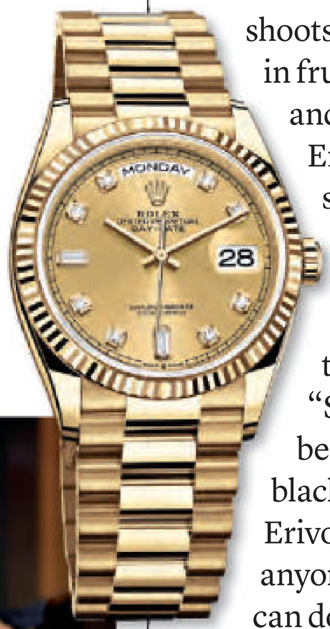
Cynthia Erivo, photographed by Danny Kasirye, wears **Louis Vuitton Escale Spin Time** watch, **LV Volt One Earrings** and **LV Volt Upside Down Ring**.

Rehearsing and performing have since become her life, and so much of who she is now reflects her Nigerian-infused childhood spent in Stockwell, south London, where the gentle ticking of her first watch, a mechanical Seiko with a rubber strap kept her on point. "I had independence [with that watch] because now I could tell the time for myself. I felt really cool," says Erivo.

Her mother Edith was a nurse and Cynthia became fascinated with the analogue watch she wore to check the pulse of patients pinned to her uniform. At home, Edith wore a delicate gold Chaika (meaning seagull in Russian) watch that she rarely took off, and as Erivo's confidence began to develop, they both knew she was bound for something more.

"I realised I could sing when I was five," says Erivo. She could see it made people happy and so she just kept on doing it. A few years later her music teacher let her sit her GCSE music exam using her voice as the instrument. Broadway and then Hollywood beckoned but for that a special kind of resilience was called for, and it came when Edith fell ill and went to hospital. Erivo was 11 and her sister eight years old, and she became hugely self-sufficient as a result. That combined with undeniable talent culminated in the arrival of her big break as Celie in *The Colour Purple* at the Menier Chocolate Factory theatre in London. When the production went to Broadway "fancy adult watches" became a possibility for the first time. First she loaded up on IWC with a steel Portofino Automatic with diamond bezel, blue dial and matching alligator strap. Then her friend Nonso gave her a Longines Dolcevita, again in steel with diamonds, after which her mentor Lauren passed along a men's Rolex Day-Date President automatic in yellow gold, and she was in deep. "I tend to like a bigger dial. Something feels powerful about that," says Erivo. "But there are also days when the 26mm dial on my Piaget Limelight Gala feels really good."

Dressed in a black leather trench for our cover shoot, bald head gleaming, she handles with intent a Louis Vuitton Tambour Street Diver in white lacquer, steel and pink gold on a rubber strap. (She is a friend of the house and they dress her exquisitely for events.) Her style in watches, as in life, is "oddball" by design, on and off stage. The Tambour's robust case was created in homage to the English drum, its lugs as handles, and it was the first watch to spring forth when the brand opened its own workshops in 2002. Everything Cynthia does and wears strikes some sort of melodious chord. "I find joy in characters who aren't one-note, who make me work for them—complex and difficult sometimes. Joyous but also spiky," says Erivo.



Below, from left: Louis Vuitton Tambour "Gold Lagoon" Street Diver watch; Cynthia Erivo singing *Edelweiss* at the AFI Tribute to Julie Andrews in 2022; Rolex Day-Date 36.

After Celie, she played three tough but brilliant women: Belle in the film *Widows*, who goes from babysitter to armed robber; the abolitionist and suffragist Harriet Tubman in *Harriet*, who escaped slavery freeing 70 others; and soul singer Darlene in *Bad Times at the El Royale*, opposite Jeff Bridges. "We were the last two on set to do that shoot, and it was glorious," Erivo says, smiling.

The Apple watch-wearing detective in her new Netflix film *Luther: The Fallen Sun* is another steely character. In one scene she frogmarches Idris Elba's character down an alleyway and shoots live rounds into the ground in frustration, her watch glinting and strap matching her outfit. Erivo is obsessed with straps—she has discussions with the costume department about what her characters wear, picking all the straps in *Luther* herself. "She has got to look brilliant because it's rare you find a black woman detective," says Erivo. "She isn't going to give anyone excuses to doubt that she can do what she does well."

Erivo describes herself as black and queer, and over the years she has become increasingly comfortable in her own skin. After playing Aretha Franklin in *Genius: Aretha* for National Geographic's series last year, she felt wiser. Just like Erivo, Franklin had a soft spot for Piaget, often wearing a yellow gold and malachite number on stage. "Aretha became part of my bloodstream, and it was really hard to listen to her music once we finished. It was like listening to a close friend who wasn't there any more," says Erivo.

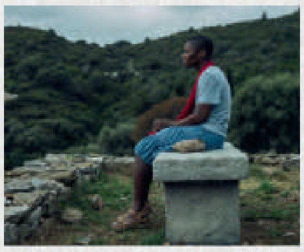
Back to this highly sensitive, emotionally literate intellectual with a need for challenges. Last year she wrote her first children's book, about a girl called Ebere whose mother encourages her to follow her dreams. Ebere creates an imaginary rocket ship that can travel anywhere, and it feels quite literally like Erivo is on board, watches and all. ■

ROLES *of Honour*

THE COLOUR PURPLE
2013

BAD TIMES AT THE EL ROYALE
2018

HARRIET
2019



DRIFT
2023

LUTHER: THE FALLEN SUN
2023

STYLED BY JASON BOLDEN. SET DESIGN BY DOMINIKA OPÁLENÁ. CYNTHIA ERIVO WEARS MACRO TWEED TRAPEZE PLEAT DRESS BY LOUIS VUITTON. HAIR BY EPH THE BARBER USING EPHS SCALP OIL AND BALM. MAKE-UP BY GISELLE ALI USING PAT MCGRATH. ON-SET STYLIST: HARRIET ELTON. STYLIST'S ASSISTANT: EMILY ROSS. PHOTOGRAPHER'S ASSISTANT: JACK STORER. DIGITAL OPERATOR: JEM RIGBY. PRODUCTION: HOLLY ROSS. CYNTHIA ERIVO: KEVIN WINTER/GETTY IMAGES FOR TNT. FILMS: ALASTAIR MUIR/SHUTTERSTOCK; JOHN WILSON/NETFLIX; MEMENTO INTL; TCD/PROD.DB /ALAMY STOCK PHOTO.

BVLGARI
BVLGARI

Citizens of ETERNITY

Rome is an enduring muse for Bulgari's classic watches, says *Nicholas Foulkes*

"WHEN WE TALK about Rome, we talk about an eternal city; it means that it's frozen in time. We are linked with the past, but we aren't bound by it. Neither are we projecting into the future. So, we are exactly framed in time. That's why we call it an eternal city, because it's not projected to the future like Paris, London and other cities with a combination of historic and contemporary architecture. It is a truly unique environment; there is nothing like it anywhere else in the world. It is an amazing outdoor museum. Each time you dig a hole in the street in Rome, you'll find historically important remains. So, it's impossible to have a modern concept of architecture."

Fabrizio Buonamassa Stigliani, creative director of Bulgari, and the man behind the Octo Roma and Octo Finissimo, is articulating his views on Roman architecture. The Octo line (especially the Finissimo) is the biggest horological hit in terms of men's watches that the brand has had this century. Indeed, I would argue that it is the biggest thing to happen to men's watches at Bulgari since the Bulgari Bulgari—although personally I have a very soft spot for the (alas, discontinued) Scuba.

This year sees a new Octo Roma, which has given Buonamassa Stigliani the opportunity to revisit the design and create a new vision. "We never speak of Octo," he explains. "It is either Octo Finissimo or Octa Roma; this redesign makes the difference between the two models much more evident. The new Roma is less radical and sharp than the first Roma: overall it is a more mature approach to the aesthetics and finishing."

Under Buonamassa Stigliani, things have come a long way since the nadir of the Assioma (the watch that was both round and straight-sided—don't ask). Nevertheless, with typical modesty he explains that the design for the Octo was waiting for him in the architectural bones of the Italian capital. In order to realise this most Roman of watches, he needed to think like an architect as well as a watch designer. It is striking to note how his thinking about Rome echoes

Above: the ceiling of the Basilica of Maxentius and Constantine inspired the Bulgari Octo Roma Automatic and Bulgari Octo Roma Chronograph.

CARACALLA: ANKARB/GETTY IMAGES. MAXENTIUS: VYACHESLAV LOPATIN/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO. PANTHEON: NILS ASTROLOGO/COURTESY OF BULGARI. SKETCH: FABRIZIO BUONAMASSA STIGLIANI. WATCHES: BULGARI.

Left: the flooring of the Baths of Caracalla, the city's second largest Roman public baths, inspired Bulgari Diva's Dream watch.

the observations of some of the greatest of contemporary architects, whether Norman Foster, who said "As an architect, you design for the present, with an awareness of the past for a future which is essentially unknown", or Frank Gehry: "Architecture should speak of its time and place, but yearn for timelessness."

Sometimes the architectural culture of Rome provides near ready-made designs that just need to be resized and relocated to the wrist. Next time you happen to be in the Forum, just raise your eyes to the barrel-vaulted roof of the Basilica of Maxentius and you find yourself looking at the familiar stepped octagon silhouette of the Octo Roma—you could almost imagine it being a mould for the case. "For sure the octagonal shape comes from the ceiling of the Basilica di Massenzio," confirms Buonamassa Stigliani. "I think that Gianni Bulgari knows the Basilica di Massenzio very well, because you can find the same octagonal elements with the round shape in the Gemme Numarie collection, the coin collection in the 1980s." Nor is it solely men's watches: at the Baths of Caracalla, direct your gaze to the floor and you will see the bright and colourful mosaic that inspired the Diva's Dream.

At Bulgari, Rome is inescapable: the company's messaging religiously reinforces the whole Dolce Vita Hollywood-on-Tiber vibe; its Monete jewels are wearable invocations of Rome's republican and imperial past; and last year when Bulgari launched the Octo Finissimo, the world's thinnest watch (since nudged into second place by Richard Mille), it did so with a lavish party in front of the Pantheon, on to which a light show was projected.

The Pantheon, built by the emperor Hadrian, is a prime example of Buonamassa Stigliani's eternal/frozen city theory. He quickly sets to work sketching on a piece of piece of paper: lines, squares, circles, columns, the triangularity of the decorated tympanum and the circularity of the dome are all deconstructed in swift, deft sure strokes of his pen, until they become a library of shapes and forms with which he can work.

"The Pantheon is a combination of different pure geometrical shapes. And this is the origin of our aesthetics," he elucidates. "We love to talk about ancient Rome's architecture, because it is gigantic and bold. This is a part of our style, in terms of proportions and details. That's why, honestly, I think that it is not correct to say that we are inspired by the shape of Roman architecture. For sure, we are inspired by some details. But we make watches, we don't make buildings. Instead, it is important to say that we are inspired by the soul of these buildings, the soul behind ancient Roman architecture. This is the most difficult part to absorb, because it's not a matter of details, it's a matter of proportions, aesthetic motifs and how you are able to play with shapes."

Having grown up in Rome, Buonamassa Stigliani has been marinated in the architectural culture of the city. He sees its influence on the arts as well as design. "If you look at the work of the metaphysical artists like de

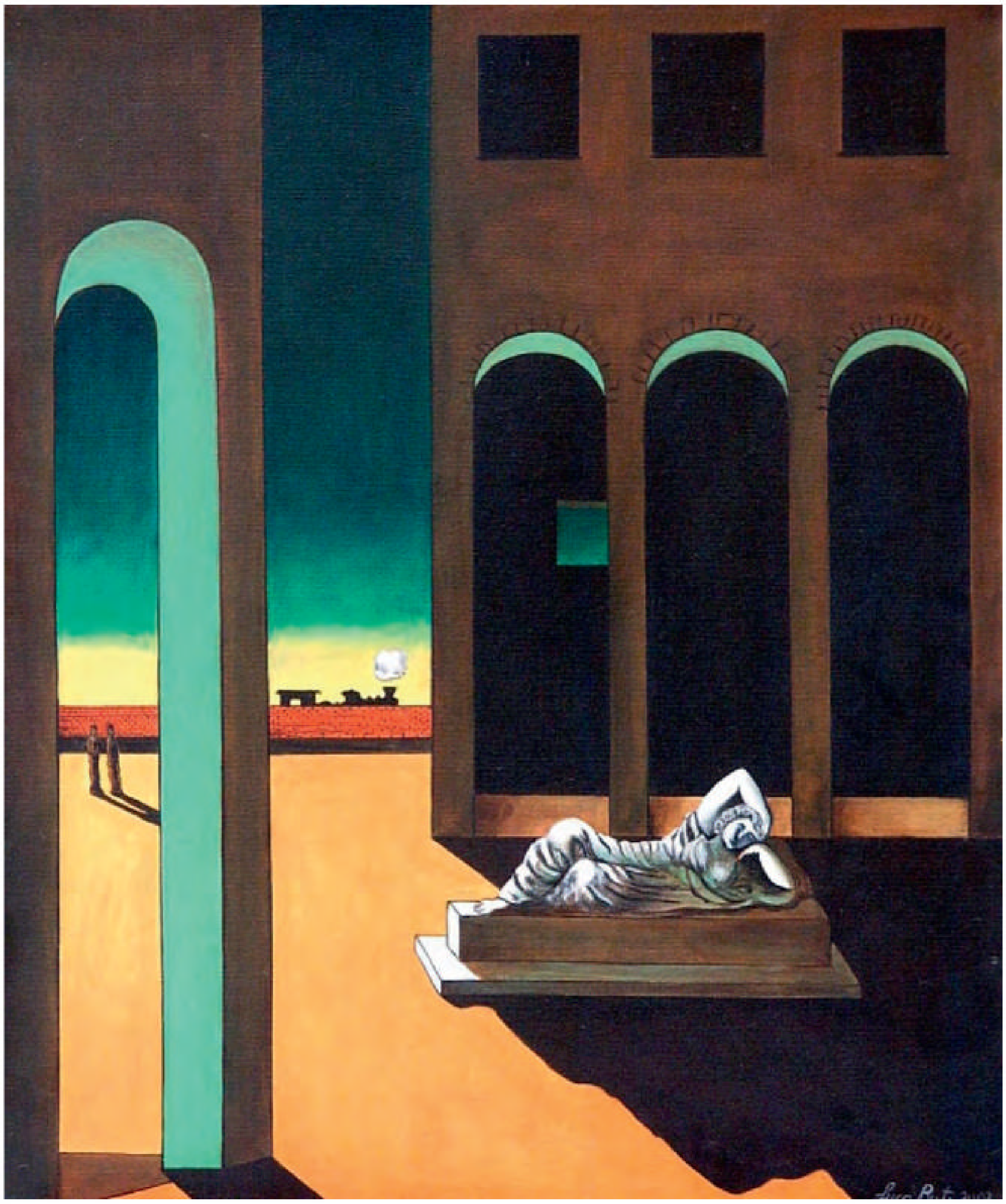
> The **OCTO LINE** is the biggest **HOROLOGICAL HIT** in terms of men's watches that Bulgari has had this century.

From left: sketch of the Pantheon and the Palazzo dei Congressi by Fabrizio Buonamassa Stigliani; Bulgari Octo Finissimo Ultra 2022 launch at the Pantheon; Bulgari Octo Finissimo Ultra.

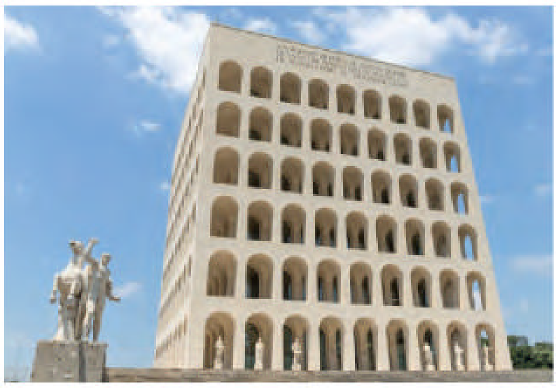
Chirico, their paintings show a lot of architectural elements, but in their work it is impossible to say whether we're talking about modern or ancient monuments."

But in Rome the architecture of de Chirico's haunting dreamscapes actually got built at the EUR, the travertine-swathed, architecturally coherent district on the way to the airport. Designed towards the end of the 1930s as a campus for the planned 1942 World Expo, the Esposizione Universale Roma, it proposed a new imperial architecture of triumphal boulevards lined with buildings so bold as to be bombastic. It is a vision of a future that never happened because of the intervention of World War II. But the EUR found an alternative future during postwar reconstruction, as a business hub. The vision of chief architect Marcello Piacentini remained, and was simply repurposed.

"Piacentini said OK, we are talking about Neoclassicism without any decorative elements, so when there is a column on the Palazzo dei Congressi, it was just something like that," says Buonamassa Stigliani. He draws two parallel lines to illustrate. "This kind of architecture is absolutely unique, because they were able to remove all the decoration. And when you see the Palazzo della Civiltà Italiana, which we Romans call the Colosseo Quadrato [the Square Colosseum], it is just the travertine facade. I think Gianni Bulgari was inspired by that, because elements of this kind of monumental architecture appear in some old advertising campaigns."



"This kind of architecture is **UNIQUE**, because they were able to remove all the **DECORATION**."



Clockwise from top left: Bulgari Monete Pendant Secret Watch; Bulgari Octo Roma Monete Tourbillon Secret Watch; *The Oracle's Tribute*, 1913, by Giorgio de Chirico; the Square Colosseum in Rome's EUR district.

A gigantic marble cube with seven storeys of 25ft-high arches piled one atop another, the Square Colosseum is just like a three-dimensional de Chirico built for a race of giants, soaring upwards in stark angular relief against the Roman sky. Around 10 years ago it was taken over by Fendi; I interviewed the brand's creative director at the time, Karl Lagerfeld, who said, "Fashion and architecture were one of the favoured forms of expressing avant-garde culture in the early decades of the 20th century. The famous Palazzo della Civiltà Italiana is a perfect example." The same could be said of watches. ■

GIORGIO DE CHIRICO: © DACS 2023/ARCHIVART/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO. CIVILTÀ ITALIANA: TIGROM/GETTY IMAGES.

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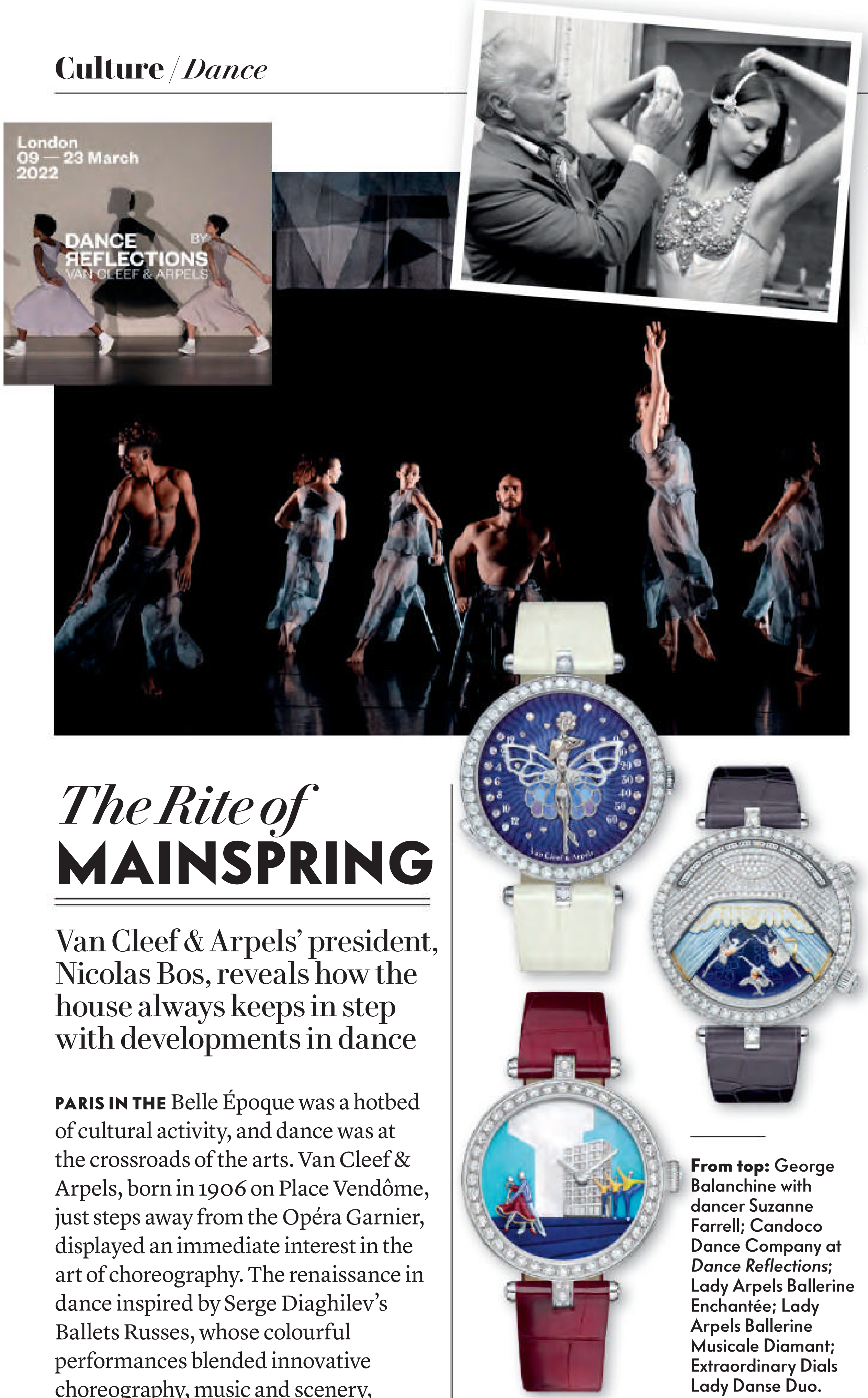

From top: George Balanchine with dancer Suzanne Farrell; Candoco Dance Company at *Dance Reflections*; Lady Arpels Ballerine Enchantée; Lady Arpels Ballerine Musicale Diamant; Extraordinary Dials Lady Danse Duo.

The Rite of MAINSPRING

Van Cleef & Arpels' president, Nicolas Bos, reveals how the house always keeps in step with developments in dance

PARIS IN THE Belle Époque was a hotbed of cultural activity, and dance was at the crossroads of the arts. Van Cleef & Arpels, born in 1906 on Place Vendôme, just steps away from the Opéra Garnier, displayed an immediate interest in the art of choreography. The renaissance in dance inspired by Serge Diaghilev's Ballets Russes, whose colourful performances blended innovative choreography, music and scenery, probably influenced the maison. White jewellery with platinum, diamonds and pearls steadily gave way to new chromatic combinations.

Van Cleef & Arpels' taste for dance brought the first ballerina clips into being in 1941. Precious cases were adorned with ballet motifs, such as the Swan Lake powder case from 1947.

A new chapter opened in the 1950s, when Claude Arpels met the choreographer George Balanchine. This encounter provided the inspiration in 1967 for *Jewels*, the triptych that Balanchine dedicated to the three great schools of dance, each associated with a precious stone: French (emeralds), American (rubies) and Russian (diamonds). Van Cleef & Arpels celebrated the 40th anniversary of this major work in 2007, with its Ballet Précieux High Jewellery collection.

In 2012, my encounter with the choreographer Benjamin Millepied heralded a new adventure. His ballet *Gems*, a creation in three parts that began in 2013 with the maison's support, inaugurated a close and lasting relationship with the artist.

Van Cleef & Arpels has also provided a new interpretation of choreographic movement using a watch mechanism. The Lady Arpels Ballerine Enchantée Poetic Complications watch (2013) depicts a dancer, the veils of her tutu coming to life to indicate the time. Presented in 2020, after more than seven years in development, the three Lady Arpels Ballerine Musicale watches pay homage to *Jewels*: each offers its own association of stones and scenery, combining music and movement to provide a genuine experience in sound and vision. In 2021, the maison also introduced a reference to Broadway musicals with the Lady Danse and Lady Danse Duo watches. Part of the Extraordinary Dials collection, they feature tableaux combining precious and ornamental stones to depict the dynamism of dancers. These pieces establish the art of ballet within Van Cleef & Arpels' vision of watchmaking: the Poetry of Time.

How can Van Cleef & Arpels continue to support the culture of choreography, while remaining faithful to the maison's history? This is why *Dance Reflections* was born in 2020. This initiative works with artists such as Rachid Ouramdane, Pam Tanowitz and Oona Doherty to create and perform works. To complete this significant commitment, a dance festival—first held in London in March 2022—is regularly organised in partnership with Sadler's Wells, the Royal Opera House and Tate Modern. Last September, *The Art of Movement* opened at the Design Museum, which included ballerina clips from the Van Cleef & Arpels collection.

More than a source of inspiration, for me dance is a multiple artform born out of exchanges with other fields. It deserves to be shared as broadly as possible. Van Cleef & Arpels intends to pursue this fruitful dialogue. ■

D
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Time SIGNATURE

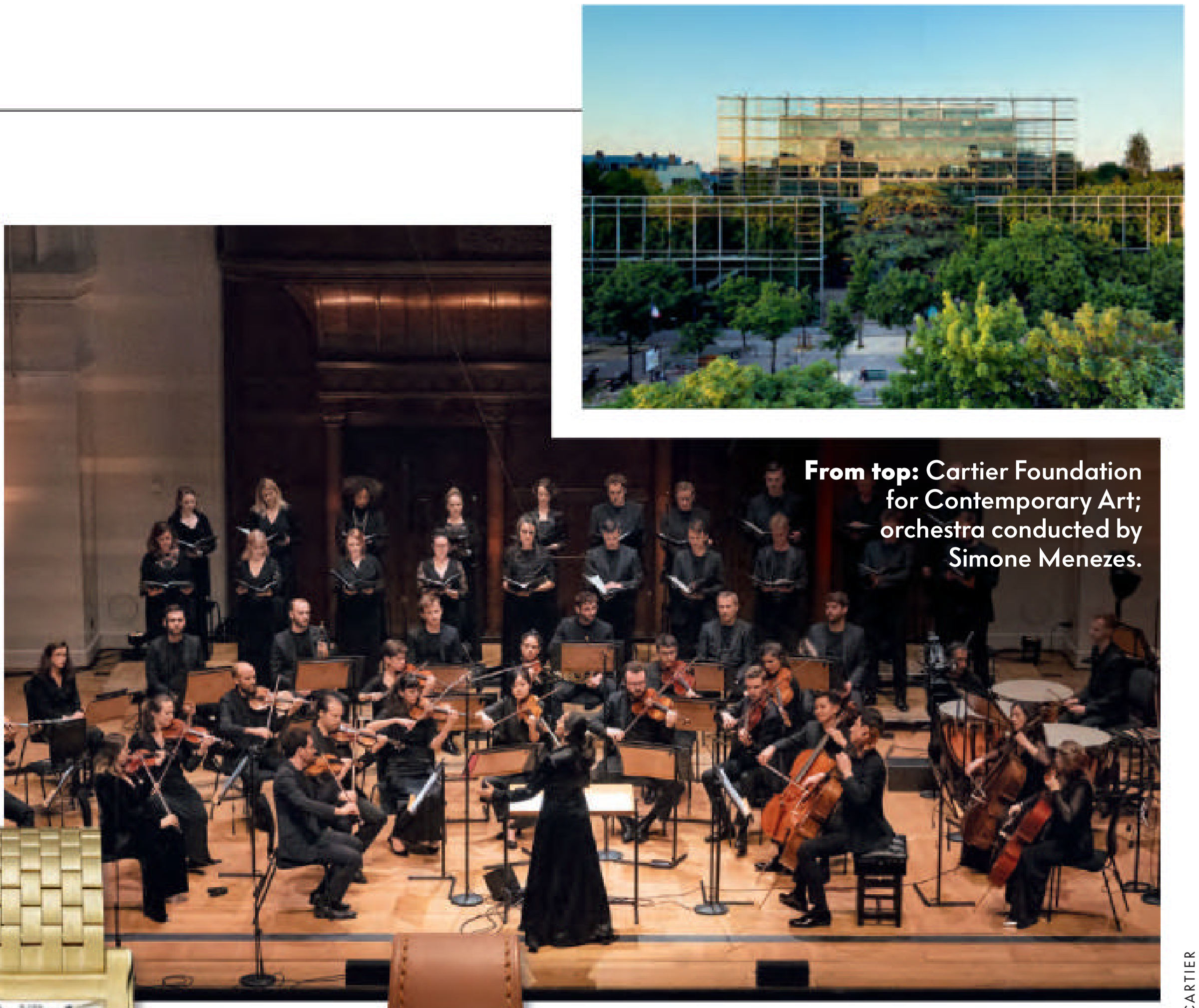
Artistic fusion has enriched horology, says Cartier CEO Cyrille Vigneron

THE AESTHETICS OF Cartier's oeuvre are rooted in architecture, design and art, especially that of the 20th century. For this reason, prominent museums exhibit works from the Cartier Collection to explore many different perspectives, periods or themes.

The evocative power of Cartier's jewellery creations has been shown at exhibitions around the world: *Beyond Boundaries* at the Beijing Palace Museum; *Crystallisation of Time* at the National Arts Center in Tokyo; *Cartier and Islamic Art* at the Musée des Arts Décoratifs in Paris. For each of these exhibitions it was important to collaborate with a curator who brought a different way of looking at these beautiful pieces, such as photographer Hiroshi Sugimoto in Tokyo, or architect Liz Diller in Paris.

Jewellery is an art of revelation and interpretation: how to show the beauty of eternal stones as well as the designers' imagination. Jewellery can have strong symbolic value; jewels are objects of desire, talismans signifying commitment and celebration. As such, makers have to look at the world with the eyes of an artist and an artisan, and as a sociologist.

When designing watches, technique and movements should serve the design, whether that involves pure lines or more exuberant flourishes. That is why Cartier timepieces have become part of our global heritage. From the Tank to the Crash, the Baignoire to the Pebble, these names have become part of the mythos of watchmaking. However, design does not mean only looking at the creations of the past, or the famous clients that have worn them. It's imperative to be open to the present, connecting with artists, architects, scientists and academic researchers.



From top: Cartier Foundation for Contemporary Art; orchestra conducted by Simone Menezes.

Clockwise from top left: Cartier Privé Tank Normale; Cartier Crash; Cartier Pebble-Shaped Watch; Cartier tortoise table clock from the *Beyond Boundaries* show in Beijing. **Below:** Simone Menezes.

The Cartier Foundation for Contemporary Art was created 38 years ago to enable artists and scientists to explore their worldview by creating original exhibitions. Many shows have toured in cities around the world such as Shanghai, Tokyo, Sydney and New York. The foundation also has a long-term partnership with the Milan Triennale.

For nearly four decades, the foundation has given a platform to artists who are either unknown in Europe or known for working in a different field. It expanded to encompass other artforms and creative projects, independent of the art market or the box office.

One such partnership is with Simone Menezes, a formidable musician, conductor and philosopher. Her project *Metanoia* connected with us from the outset, as elevating the soul is what haute joaillerie aims to do. Equally powerful is the work of the Cartier Résonances programme, which gives exposure to talented young musicians who may have been overlooked by the entertainment industry.

Further Cartier collaborations have included working with directors Mélanie Laurent and Nadine Labaki, who created original films for the Women's Pavilion in Dubai Expo 2020. A more recent partnership was with Es Devlin, whose installation *Come Home Again* in the garden of Tate Modern allowed visitors to enter a dome to examine 243 drawings. This was accompanied by choral performances which touched hearts and made people think differently about London.

Art and culture is a constituent of who we are; it's how we see the world and how it inspires us. Connecting with culture from around the world helps Cartier to create and innovate; it's our mission to stage and share the benefits of this engagement. ■

FOUNDATION: LUC BOEGLY. MENEZES/ORCHESTRA: VINCENT LAPPARTIENT. TANK/PEBBLE: CARTIER. CRASH: VINCENT WULVERYCK/COLLECTION CARTIER. TORTOISE CLOCK: STUDIO GÉRARD/CARTIER

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The Power of TWO

Inspiration flowed when two leading authors came together under the auspices of Rolex's Mentor and Protégé initiative.

The Mentor
by Margaret Atwood

Authors Margaret Atwood (*left*) and Naomi Alderman, mentor and protégée respectively in the Rolex initiative

ROLEX/BART MICHIELS

IT WAS MAY, 2011: the bar at the Intercontinental Hotel in New York. I was meeting with two mysterious operatives from a secretive society: the Rolex Mentor and Protégé Arts Initiative. Wouldn't a senior practitioner like me wish to help a deserving younger novelist, they purred?

"No," I yelped. "I've taught Creative Writing to undergraduates! The redundant hyphens! The grocers' apostrophes! The dangling gerunds! You can't drag me back!"

"Your protégé would not be a *beginner*," they soothed. I was reassured.

Rolex makes watches, and watches measure Time, and Novels are about Time, and Time is the hidden subject of every novel. As Leon Edel—the biographer of Henry James—once said, if it's a novel there's a clock in it. So it all made sense, more or less.

TIME MARCHED ON, and in early February of 2012 I met the four candidates that had been rigorously selected by the Rolex team. All were talented, all were accomplished, all were published. I needed to pick just one.

This was difficult, but in the end I chose Naomi Alderman because she wasn't in awe of me, or indeed of much else. Mentoring can't work well if the mentee is not prepared to stand her ground and defend her artistic choices.

Also, Naomi came with a dramatic life story. Raised Orthodox Jewish in London, she'd discarded the notion that women were secondary creatures, and had made her own way in the world. She'd been working in a bank in New York when, on September 11 of 2001, she'd witnessed the destruction of the Twin Towers. "I might die at any moment," she'd told herself, "so I should quit the bank, return to England, and take a crack at writing, which is what I really want to do."

Off she went. She supported herself and her writing by teaming up with a partner to build an app called *Zombies, Run!* "Exercise is boring," she told me. "*Zombies, Run!* is a way of making it more interesting by adding randomised attacks by zombies—you have to run faster to escape them." As the site's description puts it, "*Zombies, Run!* is a fitness tracker, interactive story, and base-building game all in one. As you jog, the narrative unfolds through "radio transmissions", with characters guiding you on quests—like finding med kits and tracking down missing people. Completing these usually boils down to "Keep running!"

"With me it would be more like *Zombies, Hobble*," I said. "That's okay," she said. "You can adjust it to your own speed."

So off we went on our M+P adventure. Rolex was keen to photograph us doing our mentoring so they would have pictures for their gala, but writing—unlike painting, dance, film, singing and architecture —doesn't provide much opportunity for visuals. Images of people setting texts down on screens or paper are static: the real action takes place inside your head.

NAOMI VISITED ME in Toronto, and I visited her in London, and I made a guest appearance in a *Zombies, Run!* episode. We wrote the script in a bar, laughing like drains, and I recorded it in the tiny *Zombies, Run!* sound booth. In it, I am trapped in the CN Tower, where I was safe-ish (zombies are bad at climbing stairs), reporting to London on the situation in Canada. The entire government had been zombified, but worse, so had the National Hockey League! (Zombies are hopeless on skates.)

Cheered by the success of our effort, we undertook another joint project. Among my tech pals were the creators of Wattpad, an online platform that published stories in serial form by its members, thus giving them writing practice. To give this effort a boost, Naomi and I did a two-hander, alternating the postings, with Naomi playing a teenager and me playing her grandmother. It was called the Happy Zombie Sunrise Home—a care facility for unfortunate zombies—and the premise was this: "Okie's 15. She lives in

New York. She's got a few problems: she's failing geography, her dad's a wimp, and her mother, Sumatra, is a stone-cold bitch. But things get a lot worse when Sumatra turns into a zombie and eats Okie's dad."

We didn't plan our story in advance. Each of us ended her installment with a corner that the other had to write her way out of. This was absurd, but oddly stimulating. I illustrated the Happy Zombie Sunrise Home brochure, an enjoyable if futile activity.

We did get our pictures taken, with Naomi sabotaging one of the shoots by impersonating a zombie about to gobble up my brain, but mostly we talked. I read some early versions of her manuscript, but didn't contribute much to the finished product—*The Power*—which scooped the Women's Prize for Fiction in 2017, and is now being serialised for television.

> Rolex make **WATCHES**, and watches measure **TIME**, and Time is the hidden subject of every **NOVEL.**

Naomi became a cherished friend. Indeed, it was with Naomi and her partner David that Graeme Gibson and I had our last dinner, the evening before his lethal haemorrhagic stroke, in September, 2019. Before that, however, Graeme and I had taken Naomi on several excursions outside her comfort zone.

I treasure the memory of Naomi, wearing her new red deerskin mittens, sitting beside a waterfall in the Canadian Arctic.

"This doesn't care about us at all, does it?" she asked Graeme.

"No," said Graeme, "it doesn't."

"That's very reassuring," said Naomi. ■

The Protégée
by Naomi Alderman

MENTORSHIP, TRUE MENTORSHIP, is a rare thing in the modern world.

Time was, it would have been a normal thing for a young artist to want and need. A young person with talent would apprentice themselves to a master craftsperson, learn from them, hone their skills under guidance and more than that, they would eat together, travel together, even live together so the apprentice could learn how the master shaped their life around their art.

Of course we live in individualist times now. Each of us is supposed to be somehow self-made and self-starting. In our art—at least since the Romantics—we're supposed to obey only the promptings of our own feelings and interests, not to show any signs of "influence". The type of gift relationship that is always present in mentorship is also undervalued. If it has no obvious monetary exchange value, how can one even know it's happened?

So I'm lucky. Lucky to have found this time-honoured ancient practice in the modern world. Lucky to have been picked for mentorship and artistic instruction by a real, bona fide genius. Lucky, above all, in the relationship I've been privileged to develop with Margaret.

No one can write anyone else's book, of course. And yet those masters of craft and art might have stood behind the apprentice's work bench and given a little nudge in the right direction. That's how it was with Margaret and me: we talked about my novel *The Power* on long walks—I remember one walk through Norwich when we were chewing over the question of how to convey a change in the type of spaces women might create together. "Think about convents," she said. The master giving a note and a nudge to the student. She's been generous enough to spend time discussing my new novel *The Future* with me—certainly that novel has been influenced by the trips I took with her and her late husband, the naturalist Graeme Gibson.

Those trips! I would never have done anything like them myself—I'm a short, fat ex-Orthodox Jewish girl, an urbanite, preferring to enjoy looking at nature through the window of a train or a very good hotel, never voluntarily doing anything that'd get mud on my shoes. And yet, with Margaret and Graeme I went on naturalist expeditions to Panama, Cuba and the Arctic. This was where the mentorship truly became a friendship and a lesson in living. These things have to be experienced to be written into the bones.

I have learned from Margaret to view my magpie mind—my interest in everything—as a virtue not a weakness. If she'd ever wanted, she could have retreated from the world to pursue her work. Any institution would give her a suite of rooms, all the time she wanted and perfect solitude in any great library. But the world itself is too engaging. I have learned from her that the work comes from being in the world, not simply from the pure quiet self.

In many ways, it would be wonderful if that ancient system of apprenticeships were more common today. Although the world tends to commoditisation and digital abstraction, the only way to do it really is this way, one on one. The time together is irreplaceable. ■

ALDERMAN: DAVID LEVENE/EYEVINE. *ZOMBIES, RUN!*: SIX TO START. TEXT © 2023 NAOMI ALDERMAN.

Eyes on the PRIZE

As the cultural quarter led by the Louvre takes shape in Abu Dhabi, Richard Mille hails new artistic talent. *By Nicholas Foulkes*

ONE OF THE best places from which to contemplate the power of culture in the UAE is a small roof terrace, accessed through the staff offices of the Louvre Abu Dhabi. Scorching hot and blinding white under the fierce sun, with a couple of tables sheltering under ineffective parasols, this is not a place to linger particularly long, even in February, but the view is hypnotic.

As I stand beside him, Louvre Abu Dhabi director Manuel Rabaté points out the individual projects rising from the sand of Saadiyat Island in a sweeping arc in front of my eyes. To the far left is the gigantic Guggenheim Museum, designed by Frank Gehry. The lodestar quality of a Gehry Guggenheim is well known. More than a quarter-century after it opened, his Guggenheim in the Basque country has had such a positive impact on its surroundings that the phenomenon is known as the Bilbao effect. The Guggenheim Abu Dhabi is going to be almost double the size of its Bilbao namesake, and after it opens in 2025, we might have to get used to talking about the Abu Dhabi effect.

Moving like the hour hand of a watch, Rabaté's arm now sweeps to the 12 o'clock position indicating the construction site of a residential development that will contain the world's first Louvre-branded apartments. Although unbuilt, they are already unavailable. "They sold out as soon as they were announced," says Rabaté.

At about 1 o'clock, there is the most impressive sight of all: a quartet of cowls. Although far from complete, they are already immense. Designed by Norman Foster, they have the sort of monumental presence that would be at home in a science-fiction epic such as *Dune*. This will be the Zayed National Museum, where visitors and residents alike will be able to immerse themselves in the history of the UAE.

A little, to its right, at about 2.30, is a trio of buildings: pale cream stone cubes, giant dice, with pierced, arched and slatted external walls that allow the light to filter into three religious spaces, each devoted to the great monotheistic religions. Designed by David Adjaye

Above: the Art Here 2022 Exhibition Space at the Louvre Abu Dhabi, from which a winner of the Richard Mille Art Prize was selected.

and presented under the collective name the Abrahamic Family House, this megafaith trifecta is part place of worship, part ecumenical spiritual museum and visitor centre. So fast do things move in the United Arab Emirates that the buildings are finished, inaugurated and open to visitors, while the architect's website still talks of them in the future tense.

Clockwise from far left: Richard Mille 88 Smiley; Louvre Abu Dhabi; Richard Mille CEO EMEA Peter Harrison and Louvre Abu Dhabi director Manuel Rabaté; Richard Mille 72-01 Red Gold.

And gesturing vaguely in a 4 o'clock-ish sort of direction, Rabaté's arm, by now getting a little tired, shows where the latest immersive, interactive, experiential art attraction from teamLab will open next year. Just out of sight is the Natural History Museum.

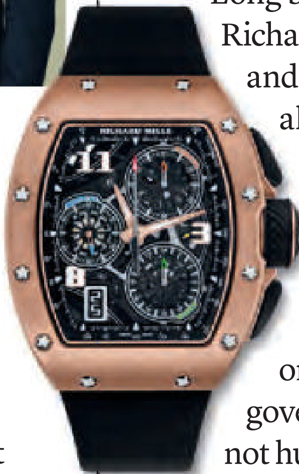
Right in the centre of this cultural constellation of starchitecture—where, to continue the horological allusion, the cannon pinion would be—is the Louvre Abu Dhabi, recognisable around the world by its pierced, multi-layered dome designed by Jean Nouvel.

The Louvre in Paris is a greatest-hits collection through which visitors wander, ticking off the must-see selfie-stations: *La Gioconda*, tick, the *Winged Victory of Samothrace*, tick, *The Raft of the Medusa*, the *Venus de Milo*, tick. The Louvre Abu Dhabi is different. It is not so much an exercise in art-historical braggadocio as an attempt to create a universal understanding and experience of the development of humanity, through the objects of all lands, epochs and cultures.

It is all about juxtaposition and dialogue, leading the visitor past palaeolithic hand axes; the monumental sculpture of Graeco-Roman antiquity; a sutra; a suit of armour; stonework carved with Quranic verses; Ruhlmann's Paris dining room for Lord Rothermere; the gold and enamel collar of the Order of the Golden Fleece, European chivalry's most coveted decoration; an astrolabe from north Africa; a jewel from the time of Theodoric, the Ostrogoth king; and more. Rather than practising cultural shock and awe, it guides and enlightens. It takes the visitor on a journey of human development and creativity. Now, thanks to the Richard Mille Art Prize, the journey continues into our times, engaging with the contemporary art being made right now in the Middle East.

The prize, now in its second year and open to artists of all nationalities in the region, was the idea of Richard Mille's CEO and president of Europe, Middle East and Africa, Peter Harrison.

> The Louvre Abu Dhabi is an attempt to create a universal **UNDERSTANDING** and experience of the development of **HUMANITY**.



Long before he worked with Richard he was visiting the region, and first came to Abu Dhabi almost 40 years ago in 1984. Since then, he has enjoyed a ringside seat on the development of the region.

"Just on Saadiyat Island alone the spending on culture by the Abu Dhabi government is into the tens if not hundreds of billions," marvels Harrison. "I think it's fascinating. Some countries build theme parks, shopping malls and golf courses, and people come to them for those theme parks, the shopping or to play golf. Then there's a certain level of tourists who come on holiday for two weeks and want to visit museums. What's really interesting about the museum district in Abu Dhabi, is that by the time it is finished, it will keep somebody occupied for several months, not just a couple of weeks."

By contrast with the huge state investment, the $60,000 prize offered by Richard Mille could seem but a small drop in the azure waters of the Persian

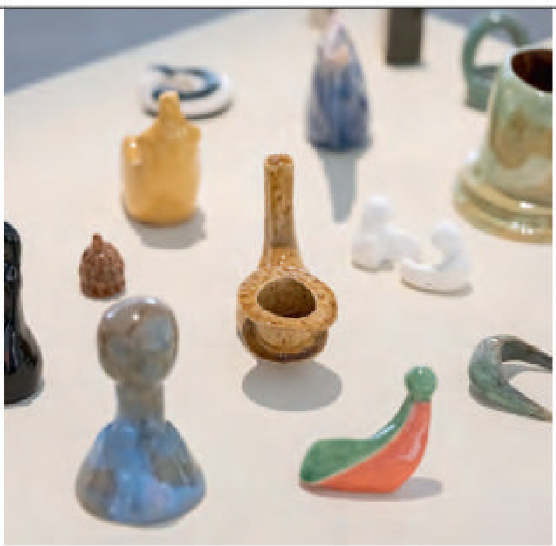
EXHIBITION: DCT ABU DHABI/AUGUSTINE PAREDES. PORTRAIT: ART HERE 2022 EXHIBITION SPACE/CHRISTOPHE VISEUX. LOUVRE ABU DHABI: DCT ABU DHABI/HUFTON+CROW.

> “The **MUSEUM DISTRICT** will keep somebody occupied for several **MONTHS**, not just a couple of **WEEKS**.”

Gulf, but as Rabaté explains, its significance is far more than financial. “In this part of the world, the state is very active, providing significant opportunities to deliver extraordinary things. But when a brand is involved, it offers an additional credibility to what we do. We have seen major investment from Abu Dhabi’s government. As well as luxury, I think Richard Mille is part of the creative economy; the support of the creative industries as a part of what we do is also a way of saying it’s not just a matter of government policy.”

The Richard Mille Art Prize was invented over a lunch at Fouquet’s; sensibly, the Louvre Abu Dhabi also houses an outpost of this very Parisian temple to the gastronomic arts. When it was announced in 2021, the 50th anniversary of the UAE, the first edition of the prize was open only to artists working in any of the seven emirates, but now the catchment area has been widened to include artists working anywhere in the Gulf Co-operation Council.

The 2023 winner was Rand Abdul Jabbar, who Rabaté believes captured the essence of ancient Mesopotamian objects in her work *Earthly Wonders, Celestial Beings*. “Dedicated to showing the interplay between tangible and ephemeral remnants of history, her collection of handmade clay objects is testament to her skill as an artist and her passion for exploring the past,” he says.



From top: artwork from *Earthly Wonders, Celestial Beings* by Rand Abdul Jabbar (top right), winner of the 2023 Richard Mille Art Prize; Abrahamic Family House; Zayed National Museum; Richard Mille 07-01 Bright Night; Guggenheim Abu Dhabi; teamLab Phenomena Abu Dhabi.

The 10 finalists, eight women and two men, presented work in media as varied as camel hide and adobe tiles made with Saudi Arabian mud. Thoughtful and considered, the works—often rooted in the culture and history of the region, some participatory, others site-specific—demonstrated conceptual and craft-based characteristics with layers of meaning to be pulled back.

This year’s finalists were exhibited together in a single gallery, but in years to come (both Rabaté and Harrison talk of at least a 10-year collaboration) competing artworks will be displayed in the main galleries in dialogue with masterpieces that date back centuries, if not millennia. Given the art-historical tradition of the Louvre, this is radical, but Harrison is typically modest about the brand’s involvement. “We provide some of the recognition, and clearly the funds to help make it a reality. But ultimately, being able to say you have exhibited at the Louvre is not exactly a blow to your career.”

Given that most artists need to be dead to get into the Louvre, the Richard Mille Art Prize offers a career-making opportunity. Who knows—with what Harrison describes as the “leg up” given by the prize, maybe one day the winning artists could even afford to wear a Richard Mille. ■

ABRAHAMIC FAMILY HOUSE: AMR ALFIKY/REUTERS/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO. ARTWORK: RAND ABDUL JABBAR/ RICHARD MILLE. GUGGENHEIM ABU DHABI: GEHRY PARTNERS, LLP. RAND ABDUL JABBAR: STÉPHANE AÏT OUARAB. TEAMLAB PHENOMENA: © DCT ABU DHABI. ZAYED NATIONAL MUSEUM: YUELAN/GETTY IMAGES.

FUTURE *Classic*

Maison Gerald Charles' new arrivals marry horological excellence and sublime design

UNIQUELY, MONSIEUR Gérald Charles Genta remains the sole independent designer in the history of haute horlogerie to have created signature models for a number of houses. More than that, his aesthetic statements for IWC, Audemars Piguet, Patek Philippe, Omega and Rolex transcended their iconic status within each maison's family to give birth to genres of their own. It was Genta's unparalleled expertise in case and bracelet design, and the peerless merging of the two, that sired the most popular category of all: the luxury sport/dress watch.

For this alone, Mr. Gérald Charles Genta has been recognised as perhaps the most influential watch designer of the past 75 years. But his vision wasn't restricted to combining the disparate qualities of elegance, ruggedness and comfort into his creations. For many years, he instilled in the watch industry a sense of humour, wit and insouciance.

It was Mr. Genta's prescience that led him to devise a haute horlogerie interpretation of an earlier, pioneering design: the Mickey Mouse watch. Since its ground-breaking appearance in his Fantasy collection in the 1980s, that bold, light-hearted timepiece freed other watchmakers to exercise such inventiveness, the watch connoisseur now able to indulge in bold colours, characters from the silver screen, novel complications and much more.

Mr. Genta passed away in 2011, but his designs live on in the timepieces manufactured by Maison Gerald Charles, founded in 2000. The manufacture produces around 2,000 watches per year, ensuring exclusivity, but variety is paramount. Fortunately, Mr. Genta left a large body of work, so the manufacture is rich with fresh concepts.

FACE THE FUTURE

Horologically astute and designed with flair, every Gerald Charles timepiece is a reflection of the brand's elegant sports style.

All Maison Gerald Charles watches in the Maestro range, a soubriquet recalling his fond nickname, start with the inimitable and instantly recognisable Maestro case. As with his classic designs, Maestro timepieces embody the spirit of sporty elegance, conceived to be worn on any and every occasion. Housed within the complex case is the in-house ultra-thin manufacture movement, the proprietary calibres that are developed with Vaucher Manufacture Fleurier, a manufacturer of high-end movements for a number of prestigious brands. Exemplifying the watch's impressive versatility is water resistance up to 100m.

Joining the current family in the coming months are five exciting new offerings. Due in March are the Maestro 9.0 Tourbillon, Ref. GC9.0-A-01, a limited-edition set with diamonds and sapphires (as well as a simple version); the Maestro GC Sport Clay, Ref. GC2.0-TX-TN-08 in a limited edition of 200 pieces; and the Maestro GC Sport Grass, Ref. GC2.0-TX-TN-02, also limited to 200 pieces. Two yet-to-be-revealed models will be launched in September.

As General Manager Federico Ziviani, states, the raison d'être of the Maison is to respect its legacy, and serve a discerning clientele. Its motto, defining the marriage of horological excellence and sublime design, remains "Artistic Creativity—Technical Mastery".

For more information, please visit geraldcharles.com

Chimes at MIDNIGHT

From minute repeaters to musical watches, the art of sonnerie strikes a chord with *Anders Modig*

"YOU WANT IT to go *da-dingggg, da-dingggg*... not *da-ding*." When Philippe Dufour, more than once hailed as the greatest living watchmaker, describes the long ring of his legendary minute repeater and sonnerie watches, he sounds like a conductor speaking to an orchestra.

A minute repeater gives you the music of time on demand. By pulling a lever on the caseband you activate miniature hammers that strike tiny gongs. This makes for a harmonious, slow-paced composition with low-pitched chimes marking the hours, double chimes the quarters, and higher-pitched chimes the minutes. This invention, that dates back to a pocket watch made by English watchmaker Daniel Quare in 1680, was first heard in a wristwatch in 1892 presented by Louis Brandt & Frère (which two years later would become Omega). The most complicated minute repeaters use the same melody as the Westminster chimes, and you can have the added value of grande et petite sonnerie, where every quarter rings. The difference? A grande sonnerie chimes the number of hours and quarters every quarter, while a petite sonnerie also strikes the quarters, but only includes the hours *on* the hour.

Given the nature of minute repeaters it comes as no surprise that Dufour listens to classical music in his atelier in Switzerland's Vallée de Joux. "This probably helps me in what I am doing, since it gives me the calm needed," he says. He uses the same steel that's used for piano wire for the gongs, cutting it to length to find just the right note. "And then you file it at different places for the resonance," he says, speaking about what is the most challenging of watch complications. Each gong can take hundreds of hours to perfect. There is also some chemistry involved in creating clearer musical tones, including hardening the steel. This is normally done by firing it until it is red hot then dropping it in oil.

The Godfather 50

From top: *Godfather* theme composer Nino Rota, 1972; Jacob & Co Opera Godfather 50th Anniversary; Philippe Dufour Grande Sonnerie.

Just as the sound of a violin is affected by its body, so the musical quality of a repeater watch is dependent on its case. "Because of its density, rose gold is better than white gold but platinum is not so good," says Dufour. "Some people find different materials to use, like Chopard, with the sapphire minute repeater. It is incredible—the sound is so pure, so clear when the vibration from the gong travels through the glass." He is referring to the 2022 Chopard L.U.C Full Strike Sapphire, which uses sapphire crystal gongs machined in a single piece to deliver purer, longer, more harmonious sounds compared with metal minute repeaters. It sounds like magic—as anyone who has tapped a wine glass knows, glass is a great sound carrier.

Chopard's co-president Karl-Friedrich Scheufele contacted the violinist Renaud Capuçon for artistic and emotional endorsement. "The centre of this timepiece is the purity of the sound," says Capuçon, taking a break from rehearsals with the Lausanne Chamber Orchestra. "Just as great musicians never finish learning and searching, it is the same with watchmaking at this level—you want to create innovations," he says about the timepiece whose bezel, crown, caseback, rear glass, caseband and dial are all made of sapphire crystal in order to air the F and C sharp notes chosen by Chopard. Other movements, such as the 2013 Piaget Calibre 1290P, use G sharp for the hours and A sharp for the minutes.

In 2020, Lucerne-based Carl F. Bucherer gave Swedish composer Lisa Streich carte blanche to create a piece of music based on its Triple Symphony timepiece. Streich composed *Periphery*. It was recorded with 22 musicians from the Lucerne Festival Orchestra in the legendary Teldex Studio in Berlin, where everybody from Herbert von Karajan to Britney Spears has recorded. The ethereal, experimental piece not

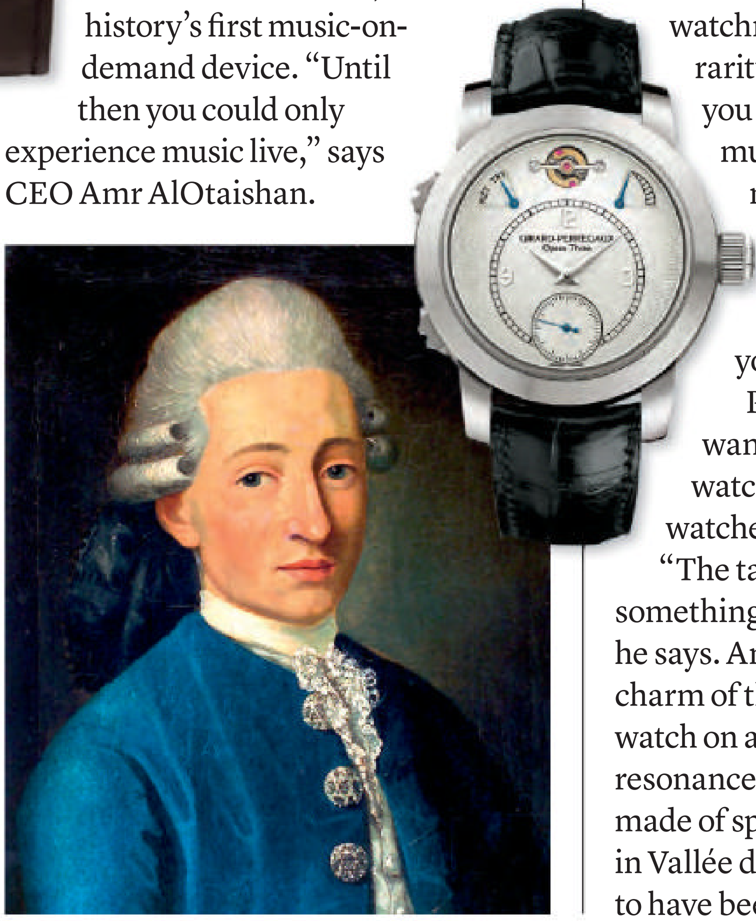
ROTA: KEYSTONE/HULTON ARCHIVE/GETTY IMAGES. CAPUCON: CHOPARD. MOZART: FINE ART IMAGES/HERITAGE IMAGES/ GETTY IMAGES. JACOB & CO. PHILIPPE DUFOUR. CHOPARD. REUGE X MB&F. PIAGET. GIRARD-PERREGAUX.

only imitated the sounds of the watch, but was also inspired by its patented mechanical movements. For instance, a frenetically rotating buzzing bow imitates the peripheral rotor, whereas the peripherally floating tourbillon is given musical life by the brass and string sections, accompanied by a triangle played while placed on a timpani drum, which impersonates the peripherally mounted regulator of the minute repeater. Finally, the gongs are played by a grand piano. "The timepiece is playful," says Streich. "You become like a child, fascinated by the mechanics and the innocent yet logical and easy to comprehend sounds and chimes."

Samir Merdanovic, chief technology officer at Carl F. Bucherer, agrees on the importance of pace and rhythm. "For the Triple Symphony this takes around 20 seconds to strike 11.59—11 low-pitch strikes for the hours, three double strikes for three-quarters, and 14 high-pitched strikes for the minutes," he says. "With faster repeaters, that would take around 15 seconds, and it can be difficult to hear the time."

If you want to hear your watch play an actual tune, then you need to go for a timepiece with an integrated musical movement, inspired by the 18th-century music box. Most of these are based on a rotating cylinder or disc with raised barbs that "play" a metal comb with various notes. Christophe Claret was among the modern adaptors in the mid-1990s, resulting in noteworthy timepieces such as the Girard-Perregaux Opera Three, for which you could choose Mozart's *Eine Kleine Nachtmusik* or Tchaikovsky's *Swan Lake*. This year sees the 10th anniversary of Breguet's La Musicale, which plays part of Bach's Badinerie in B minor.

From left: Chopard L.U.C Full Strike Sapphire; classical violinist Renaud Capuçon; Reuge x MB&F Music Machine I Reloaded.



Above: Piaget Polo Emperador Minute Repeater. **Right:** Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, whose composition *Eine Kleine Nachtmusik* is played by the Girard-Perregaux Opera Three.

For those favouring 20th-century tunes, a spectacular disc technology was included in the 2013 Ulysse Nardin Stranger, which plays the evergreen Frank Sinatra standard *Strangers in the Night*, while in 2022 Jacob & Co created the Opera Godfather 50th Anniversary, which uses a cylinder to play 120 notes from the film's leitmotif.

Another major player in this field is Reuge. Its roots date back to 1796 and Antoine Favre's musical box, history's first music-on-demand device. "Until then you could only experience music live," says CEO Amr AlOtaishan. Reuge has long been involved with wristwatches, but above all is famous for its larger automata—the 2021 MB&F collaboration Music Machine 1 Reloaded plays 35-second snippets of Pink Floyd's *Another Brick in the Wall*, Deep Purple's *Smoke on the Water*, John Lennon's *Imagine*, the *Imperial March* by John Williams and Jerry Goldsmith's *Star Trek* theme. "Our machines are developed with seven in-house mechanical musicians. They have a musical ear, they have a fundamental understanding of notes, and they are also able to utilise the machines to produce them," says AlOtaishan.

For Alexandre Ghotbi, Phillips head of watches for continental Europe and the Middle East, it's hard to compare chimes with musical watches. "A musical watch plays the music but the music doesn't give the time, whereas a minute repeater makes more sense in a watch as it is a time function," he says. He believes this is why musical watches haven't taken off on the secondary market compared with repeaters by Patek Philippe, Vacheron Constantin, Cartier, A. Lange and Söhne, Audemars Piguet and Kari Voutilainen. "Vintage wristwatches from the 1930s to the 1950s are especially popular," he says. "Back then there were so few who were able to miniaturise this pinnacle of watchmaking, which gives a true rarity. To make a minute repeater you need the experience, the musical ear and the dexterity. It makes an incredible difference if a few microns are filed away—so you need to know to stop when you have the best sound."

Philippe Dufour doesn't really want to compare chiming watches with musical box watches, but does feel a similarity. "The target is the same, to create something that gives a good vibration," he says. And to reveal all the subtle charm of the chime, why not place your watch on a purpose-built, amplifying resonance holder by JMC Lutherie? It is made of spruce from the Risoud forest in Vallée de Joux—the same wood said to have been used by Stradivarius. ■

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LOUIS VUITTON
HAUTE HORLOGERIE

Andy Warhol with Yves Piaget in 1984. **Right:** with Cornelia Guest, Brooke Shields, Régine and Olga Rostropovich. **Inset:** Warhol's Piaget gold ingot watch (1974).

Another Fifteen MINUTES

Andy Warhol's love for Piaget watches never led to a collaboration—but now the artist's preferences are finding new fame as bespoke pieces. *By Nicholas Foulkes*

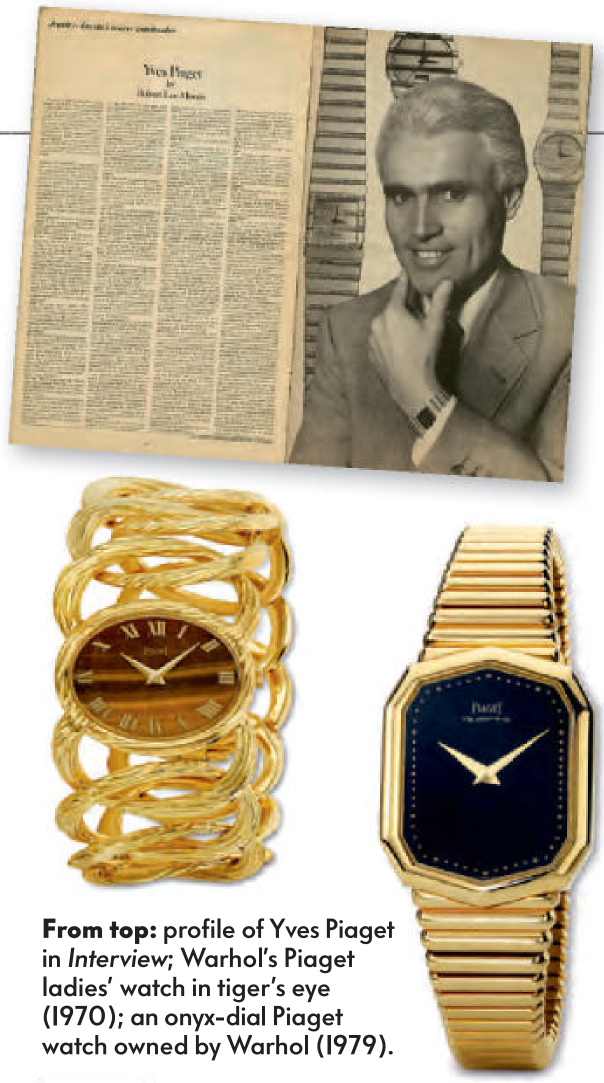
"SOME OF OUR customers are collectors: collectors of pieces of art. They like our watches because they are pieces of art, and they buy them as pieces of a collection." It is 1983 and Andy Warhol's *Interview* magazine is speaking to Yves Piaget, the man it describes as "Europe's master watchmaker". "Our customers, most of them, view a Piaget watch as a piece of art," says Yves Piaget.

Warhol loved watches, and the trajectories of America's greatest Pop artist and "Europe's master watchmaker" intersected exactly at the right time. Piaget and Warhol first met in 1979. By the 1980s they were hanging out together: pictures show them out in the New York night in black tie, with club queen Régine, teen star Brooke Shields and blue-blood beauty Cornelia Guest.

A 1984 photograph of the two men portrays them like the two halves of modern secular diptych. It is the perfect illustration of the strength of their personal iconography: Piaget's orthodontically precise porcelain white smile and immaculately coiffed silver hair, and Warhol's unruly thatch-style white wig and glasses are a sort of brand identity. Reproduce just the smile and the hair, or the wig and the specs, and you would still recognise the two men: one a businessman who thought like an artist, the other an artist who thought like a businessman.

Fascinated by fine things, the late 1970s saw Warhol integrated into New York high society. Lynn Wyatt once told me that he was the John Singer Sargent of his day, memorialising the American upper crust in portraits that were powerful social tokens. They were as much status symbols as the watches made by Yves Piaget, who cheerfully admitted that while some bought his watches for their artistic content, others sought them out for their status-conferring properties: "Some of our customers want to prove to people around them that they are rich enough, that they are able, that they could buy a Piaget watch. So that status is very important in our

WARHOL AND PIAGET: DENNIS WHITEHEAD. GROUP: PATRICE PICOT/ GAMMA RAPHO. KABUKI THEATRE: GRANGER HISTORICAL PICTURE ARCHIVE/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO. *INTERVIEW* MAGAZINE. PIAGET. SEIKO.

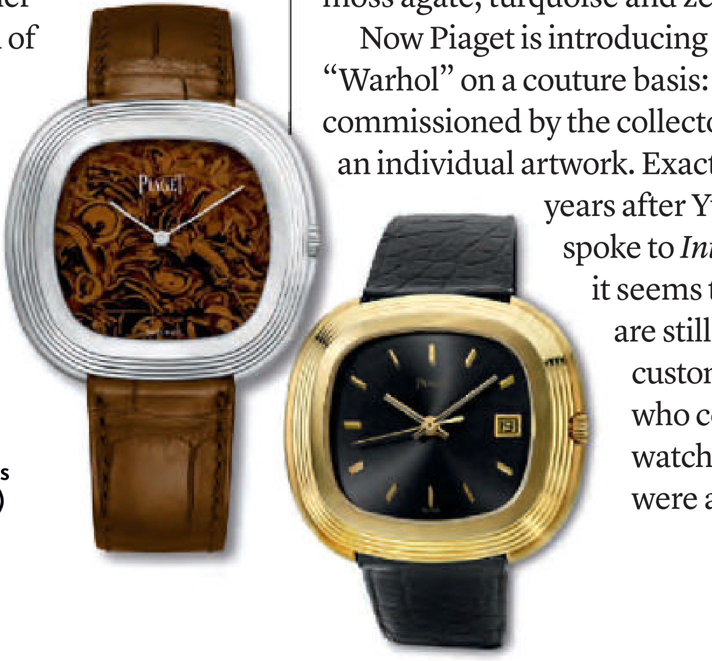


From top: profile of Yves Piaget in *Interview*; Warhol's Piaget ladies' watch in tiger's eye (1970); an onyx-dial Piaget watch owned by Warhol (1979).

philosophy, in the meaning of our enterprise and our product."

Piaget in those days was remarkable, and it dominated the late 1960s, 1970s, and early 1980s with its truly daring designs and exotic creations. At the time (alas, no longer) it was unique among high watchmaking houses in using only gold and platinum. Yves Piaget believed in culture not compromise. "We don't make any stainless-steel, or usual metal watches," he said proudly. Nor did he adhere to the modern reductive practices of limiting the number of different designs available—the "collection is very wide and now contains around 1,200 different models," he said. Today this would be considered commercial suicide; back then Warhol said it made him Europe's master watchmaker.

Piaget had already worked with Salvador Dalí, the other great artist-showman of the 20th century, but beyond appearing in *Interview* magazine, Yves Piaget never got round to collaborating with Warhol, and by February 1987 the artist was dead.



Right: Piaget Black Tie Vintage Edition Jaspé Elephant (2023); Warhol's yellow-gold version (1973)

Only when Warhol's estate came up for auction was it revealed how much he appreciated watches. His collection included eight Piagets: a watch inside a gold ingot; a lady's watch in gold and tiger's eye; and a further six Piaget men's watches, including an extravagant model with a TV-screen-shaped case and stepped bezel, that I believe should be known as the "Warhol". (After all there is a pair of Berluti shoes called Andy, so why not a watch?)

And now the "Warhol" is back, with Piaget mounting a small exhibition of contemporary versions of the watch at Watches and Wonders in a variety of metals and hardstone dials.

Piaget CEO Benjamin Comar explained that this was initiated in the brand's Monaco boutique, when a collector came in to commission this watch in a combination of white gold and malachite, and white gold and lapis. He returned and ordered no fewer than 10 of the same watch, all in platinum and with different stones including orange aventurine, yellow limestone, elephant jasper, blue pietersite, red moss agate, turquoise and zebra jasper.

> Piaget dominated the early 1980s with its truly **DARING** designs and **EXOTIC** creations.

Now Piaget is introducing the "Warhol" on a couture basis: to be commissioned by the collector as an individual artwork. Exactly 40 years after Yves Piaget spoke to *Interview*, it seems that there are still Piaget customers who collect watches as if they were art. ■

Class ACT

One of kabuki theatre's most celebrated actors brings drama to Seiko's new designs, says *Mark Cho*

From top: actor Ebizo Ichikawa; 18th-century woodblock print of kabuki theatre.

CREATED MORE THAN 400 years ago, kabuki is a form of Japanese theatre that features stylised acting, striking costumes, sumptuous sets and stirring sound and music. The word *kabuki* is a contraction of song (*ka*), dance (*bu*) and acting (*ki*). Like a play, kabuki performances have storylines with plots ranging from historical drama to everyday tales of Japan's Edo period. One of the most fascinating moments during a kabuki performance is *mie*, when the actors hold an artful pose forming a striking tableau and highlighting a key moment in the story.

The Seiko Presage Kabuki is inspired by the performance art of kabuki, and the watch is a satisfying mix of design elements that reflect one of kabuki's foremost practitioners, Ebizo Ichikawa, as well as Seiko's personal relationship with him.

The history of kabuki spans generations. Kabuki actors are born into

their roles and today's stars can trace their lineage back to the 17th-century originators of the art form—Ebizo Ichikawa comes from one of kabuki's most important families. But unlike most kabuki actors, Ichikawa-san became a popular TV and film actor as well.

Seiko and kabuki are very much intertwined. The Kabukiza, the most famous kabuki theatre in Japan, is based in Tokyo's Ginza district, a stone's throw from Seiko's headquarters, and the CEO of Seiko, Shinji Hattori, is a passionate fan.

The Seiko Presage Sharp Edged series of watches combines modern and classic themes. The colours of the watch were chosen in collaboration with Ebizo Ichikawa, and are a combination of black, gold and a reddish-brown known in Japanese as *kakiiro*, or the colour of the persimmon fruit. Many generations ago, the Ichikawa family decided to use it as one of the key colours in their performances, and it remains an integral part of the kabuki palette today.

The watch has a contemporary appearance given its black-coated case and unusual black horse-leather strap. Looking closer, there is also a nod to traditional Japanese crafts through the use of the *asanoha* geometric pattern on the dial. The pattern abstractly depicts a field of interlocked hemp leaves and represents health, growth and prosperity.

Kabuki actors can be granted a hereditary name by their peers and in the case of Ebizo Ichikawa, 2022 was the year he was given the stage name Danjuro, the most important name in the kabuki world and also that of the first Ichikawa. The designers at Seiko added a burst of gold to the watch as their way of congratulating the new Danjuro on his great achievement. ■

> The **KABUKIZA**, the most famous kabuki theatre, is based in Tokyo, a **STONE'S THROW** from Seiko's headquarters.

Top: Seiko Presage Kabuki watch. **Below:** Ebizo Ichikawa performing kabuki theatre at the 2020 Tokyo Olympic opening ceremony.

Behind the MASK

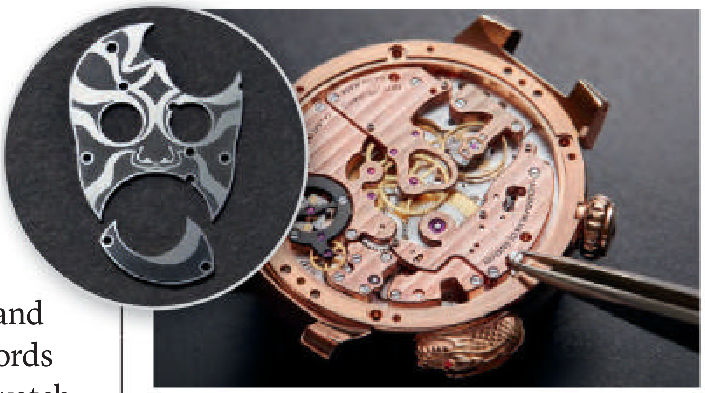
The next act in Louis Vuitton's automaton odyssey is a watch inspired by Chinese opera, says *Nicholas Foulkes*

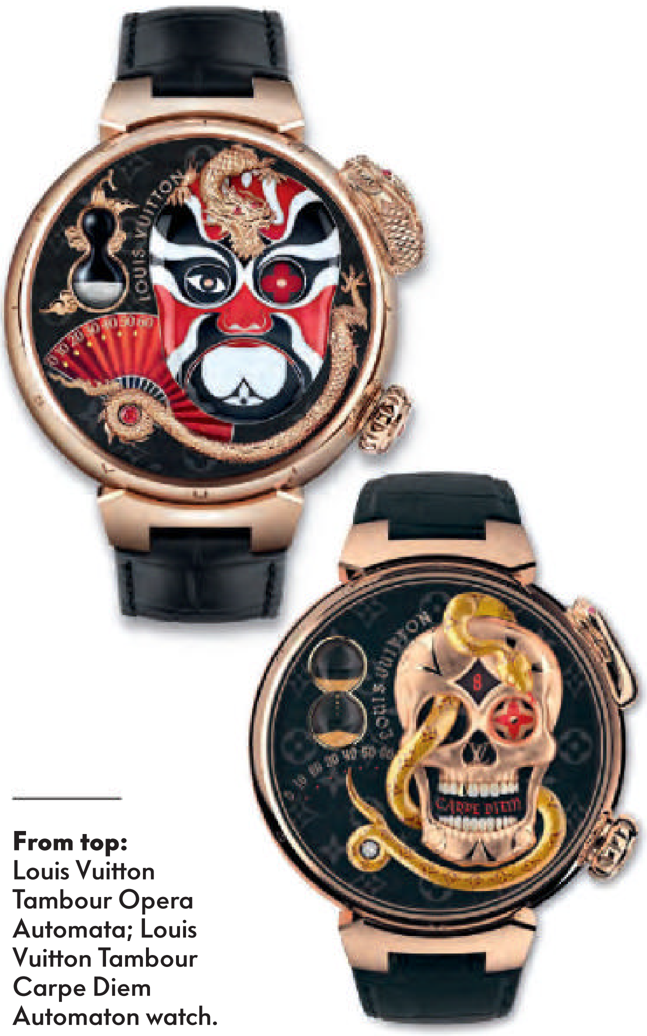
ALLOW ME TO express my gratitude to La Fabrique du Temps, Louis Vuitton's watch factory, for shining the light of knowledge into one of the darkest corners of my ignorance. To my shame, before the launch of the Tambour Opera Automata I was utterly ignorant of the artistic discipline that is known as *bian lian*, a much-cherished and culturally significant aspect of Sichuan opera. BTOA (Before Tambour Opera Automata) my entire knowledge of Chinese opera was limited to the fact that the father of restaurateur Michael Chow was a star of Beijing opera.

But now, thanks to the latest masterpiece from the skilled watchmaking double act of Michel Navas and Enrico Barbasini, I have become aware of a marvellous artform that presents sleight of hand in the context of dance, music and lavish costumes. Masters of the ancient art of *bian lian* spend their lives perfecting the quick change of coloured masks until these changes are so swift and assured that they seem like magic. The colours of the masks represent specific character traits and emotions: red tends to be an auspicious colour in Asia, and here it signals such characteristics as bravery and loyalty, whereas white alerts the audience to cunning, treachery and villainy. Of course, it is a good deal more subtle and involved than that, but the skill, speed and grace with which the actors' faces change is something that even the most ignorant among us can enjoy and appreciate.

From the horological point of view, this is the next step in a journey that began in 2021 with the Carpe Diem, the watch featuring a time-telling skull entwined in the coils of a snake. Jumping

Above: traditional Sichuan opera.
Right: the mask-shaped bridge inside the Tambour Opera Automata.





From top: Louis Vuitton Tambour Opera Automata; Louis Vuitton Tambour Carpe Diem Automaton watch.

hours were visible through a hole in the skull, while retrograde minutes were indicated by the snake's tail: the skull also winked and opened its mouth to display the words *carpe diem*. It is probably the best watch that Louis Vuitton has ever made.

Now that same 426-part mechanism has been put at the service of a *bian lian* mask instead of a skull, and the snake is replaced by a dragon. Alas, the mask does not change colour, but the automaton is, nonetheless, engaging to watch: the dragon's tail indicates the minutes moving along the folds of a fan, while the dragon's head moves to reveal the time on the forehead of the mask. Eyebrows frown. A monogram flower appears in its right eye. And the downturn of the mouth indicates sadness, but not too much.

Indeed, the sadness had to be moderated, according to Jean Arnault, marketing and development director of Louis Vuitton Watches. "Where you see the time on the face, we had to change the number four into a four-petal monogram motif," he says, "because the number four represents death, and death in the middle of the face was not something terribly pleasant."

The **DRAGON'S TAIL** indicates the minutes moving along a **FAN**, while its head **MOVES** to reveal the time on the mask's forehead.

There were watchmaking challenges, too. The face of the watch is a collaboration between the famous enameller Anita Porchet and engraver Dick Steenman, who created such depth and relief in his detailed engraving of the dragon for the prototype that when the watch was cased, the dragon's head kept hitting the inner side of the watch glass and needed to be redesigned and engraved less flamboyantly.

Dial aside, Arnault is particularly proud of the black polished mask-shaped bridge, visible when the watch is turned over. "Black polish is very complicated, especially on such a large surface. I have not seen such a large surface of black polish before," and having done it, he knows why it is so seldom done: as well as being difficult to do, it is also expensive. "Polishing that one bridge costs as much as a chronograph movement," says Arnault.

With this second automaton watch something of a theme begins to emerge: the Carpe Diem was a reference to a tradition of European art—now the focus has moved to an Asian artform.

"The Carpe Diem was a representation of European culture and the *vanitas* that was painted centuries ago," says Arnault. "Chinese opera allows us to pay tribute to the ancient tradition of the mask—the mask display."

Such is the complexity of the work that production will be limited to around 20 pieces, but if you do not get one this time there are plans for this watch to continue its culturally oriented world tour. "We are trying to find niche, cultural elements from different parts of the world," says Arnault. Happily, this is not the last time that we will see the calibre LV 525 in action. ■

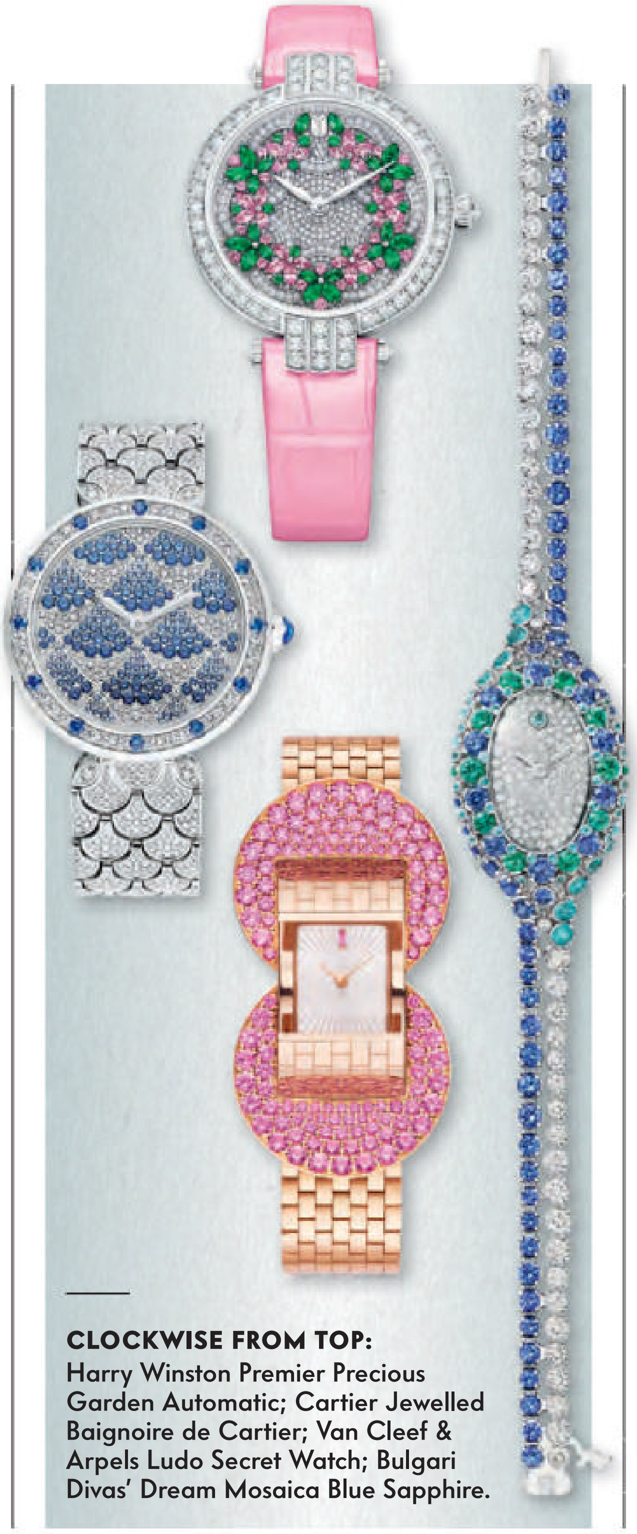
ICHIKAWA: YOHEI OSADA/AFLO/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO. SICHUAN OPERA: XINHUA/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO. SEIKO. LOUIS VUITTON.

WATCHES OF THE YEAR

FROM THE HEIGHTS OF HAUTE HORLOGERIE TO THE MOST COMPLEX COMPLICATIONS, *ON TIME* HIGHLIGHTS THE ONES TO WATCH IN 2023

Cut a dash—it's time to sparkle

By **VIVIENNE BECKER**



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP:
Harry Winston Premier Precious Garden Automatic; Cartier Jewelled Baignoire de Cartier; Van Cleef & Arpels Ludo Secret Watch; Bulgari Divas' Dream Mosaica Blue Sapphire.

THE CULTURAL LAYERING that has become a hallmark of modern jewellery has also infiltrated today's complex and captivating high jewellery watches. For maisons, it offers a way of delving into their heritage and strengthening brand identity.

Chanel, for example, fuses fashion, jewels and time by transforming the humble pincushion that always sat on Coco Chanel's wrist into a series of five Mademoiselle Privé watches. On grosgrain straps, mimicking the metal wrist bands, the oversized cases are domed like the pincushion, lending the watches a cool contemporary vibe while allowing room for some thrilling métiers d'art dials: a lacework of camellias, bejewelled handbag-quilting; black tweed scattered with chains, pearls and brooches; a jacket mid-pattern, strewn with ribbon and miniature gold scissors; and a random pavé of diamonds, imitating clustered pinheads.

Dior too dips into the couture story, adding to its Dearest Dior high jewellery collection with La D de Dior Précieuse Dentelle secret watch. Light and white, the pavé-diamond dial shelters beneath an intricate openwork cover, recreating handmade lace in perfect detail, one model in all white diamonds, the other in yellow gold with sunlit-yellow diamonds.

The diamond-smothered Dior Grand Soir Reine des Abeilles showcases a gem-mosaic queen bee, referencing Christian Dior's beloved Granville clifftop garden, while Van Cleef & Arpels' own cultural classic, the 1934 Ludo bracelet, given Louis Arpels' nickname, has been reinvented as the Ludo Secret Watch. The design masquerades as a bracelet with slinky, articulated brick-like rose-gold links threaded through circles, pavé-set in either diamonds or pink sapphires that, when pressed, open the goldwork between them to reveal the rectangular dial.

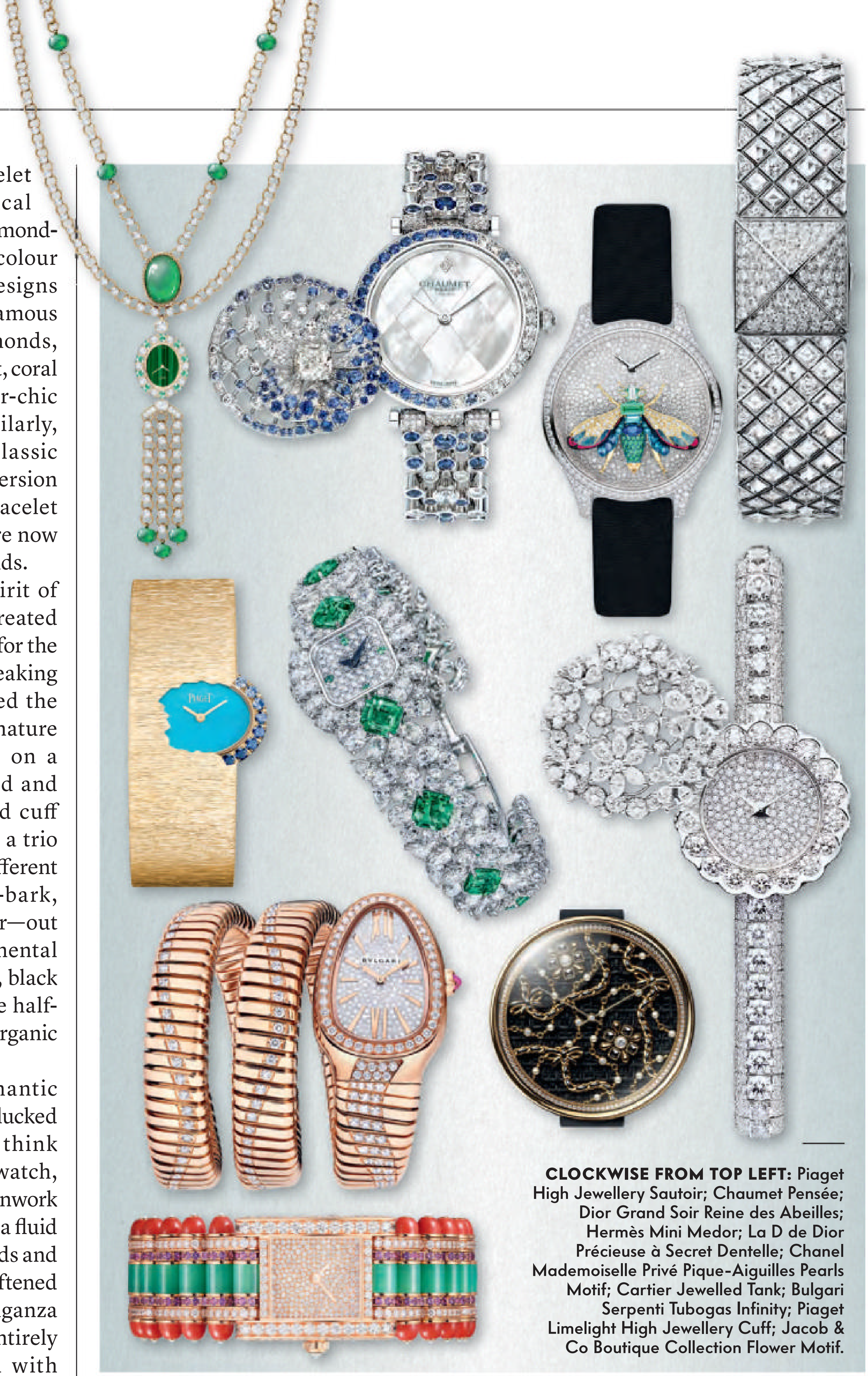
Bulgari draws on the role it plays in the cultural life of Rome with the Divas' Dream Mosaica from the Time is a Jewel collection, which references the mosaics at the Baths of Caracalla (see p42) in the dial's gem-set fan-shaped pattern. Meanwhile a slithering serpentine diamond line trails across the gold coils of its new Serpenti Tubogas Infinity, reinvigorating an enduring icon.

Cartier has jewelled up two of its own design icons. The elegant, curvaceous Baignoire is dressed for cocktails in diamonds or a peacock blend of emeralds, blue sapphires and chrysoprase, while the Tank is loaded on to a flexible, gem-set bracelet composed of rolling cylindrical elements, each studded with a diamond-inset cabochon, that, like the colour combos, pay homage to the designs of Jeanne Toussaint, Cartier's famous director of fine jewellery: diamonds, rubies and chrysoprase; amethyst, coral and chrysoprase; and the super-chic gold, diamonds and onyx. Similarly, Hermès nails the bedecked-classic mood with a spectacular new version of its Medor timepiece—the bracelet and the pyramidal stud cover are now completely smothered in diamonds.

Piaget has rekindled the spirit of the 1960s and 1970s, when it created avant-garde jewelled timepieces for the hedonistic jet set with barrier-breaking audacity. A 1969 model inspired the Sautoir pendant watch with signature Palace Décor engraved dial, on a handmade chain, dangling gold and diamond tassels. Its celebrated cuff watches find new expression in a trio of timepieces, featuring three different styles of engraving—a wood-bark, an icy frost and a Palace Décor—out of which appear to grow ornamental gem-rimmed dials in white opal, black opal or turquoise, their elegance half-hidden and contrasting with the organic textured bracelets.

From its own rich and romantic cultural heritage, Chaumet has plucked the pansy motif, meaning "I think of you", for the Pensée secret watch, which is shyly covered by the openwork diamond and sapphire flower, on a fluid bracelet of knife-wire set diamonds and sapphires. Even Jacob & Co has softened up with a feminine floral extravaganza for its Boutique collection, set entirely with diamonds, and studded with superlative emeralds.

And finally, Harry Winston has reinterpreted its famous floral wreath, for the one-of-a-kind Premier Precious Garden watch, on which a vibrant springtime garland of pink sapphire and tsavorite blossoms is overlaid on to a patterned diamond-pavé dial, on a pink pearl alligator leather strap. With a single emerald-cut diamond at 12, it is the perfect expression of Winston's cultural identity. ■

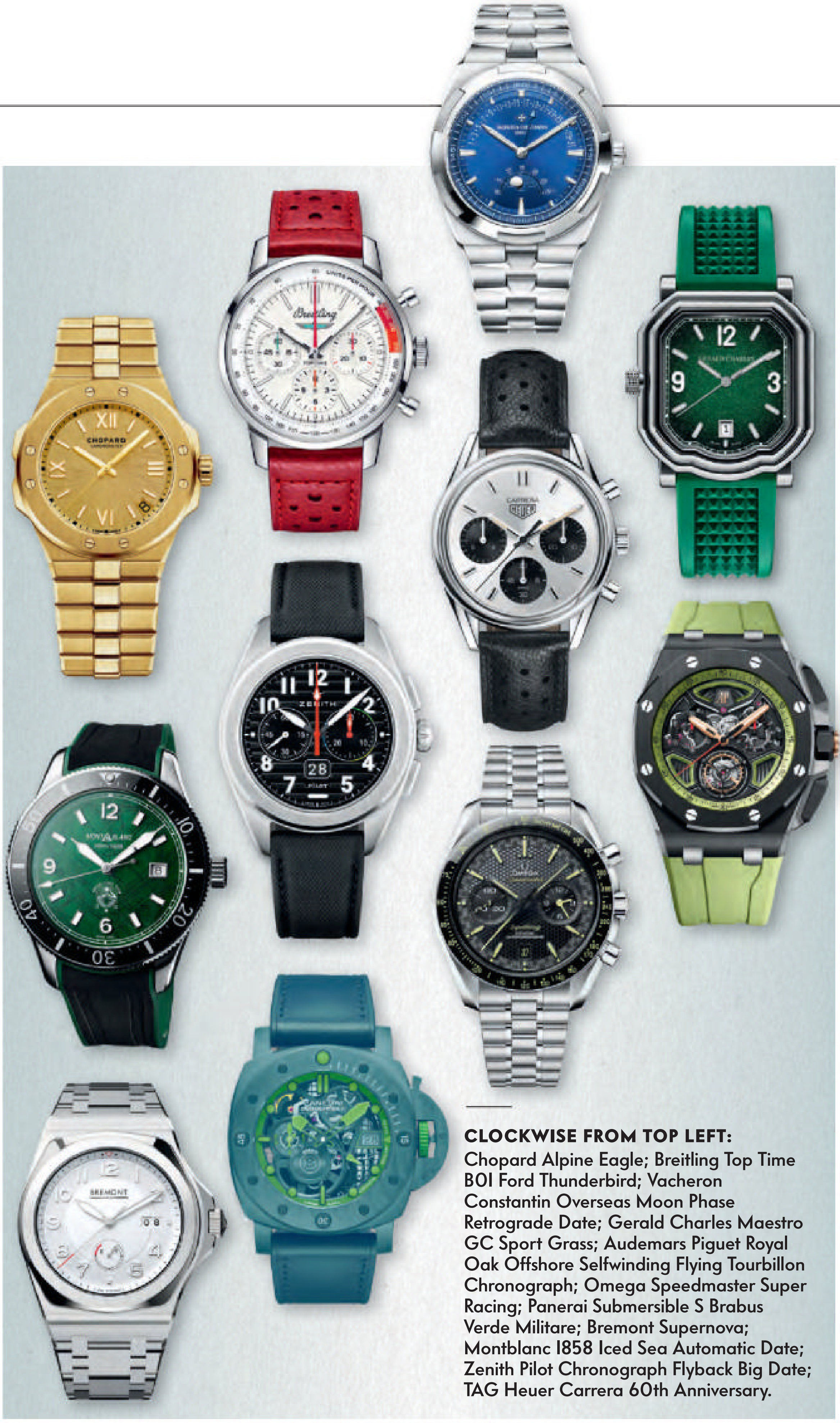


CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Piaget High Jewellery Sautoir; Chaumet Pensée; Dior Grand Soir Reine des Abeilles; Hermès Mini Medor; La D de Dior Précieuse à Secret Dentelle; Chanel Mademoiselle Privé Pique-Aiguilles Pearls Motif; Cartier Jewelled Tank; Bulgari Serpenti Tubogas Infinity; Piaget Limelight High Jewellery Cuff; Jacob & Co Boutique Collection Flower Motif.

CULTURAL LAYERING *OFFERS MAISONS A WAY OF DELVING INTO THEIR* **HERITAGE** *AND STRENGTHENING BRAND* **IDENTITY.**

Triumphs of sporting endeavour

By **ROBIN SWITHINBANK**



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:
Chopard Alpine Eagle; Breitling Top Time B01 Ford Thunderbird; Vacheron Constantin Overseas Moon Phase Retrograde Date; Gerald Charles Maestro GC Sport Grass; Audemars Piguet Royal Oak Offshore Selfwinding Flying Tourbillon Chronograph; Omega Speedmaster Super Racing; Panerai Submersible S Brabus Verde Militare; Bremont Supernova; Montblanc 1858 Iced Sea Automatic Date; Zenith Pilot Chronograph Flyback Big Date; TAG Heuer Carrera 60th Anniversary.

EVEN WITHOUT OFFICIAL figures to burnish the theory, there's no doubt the beating heart of the Swiss watch industry is the sports watch, a trope so broad it might reasonably serve as a catch-all for anything that isn't explicitly dressy or complicated. Steely three-handers, divers', pilots' and drivers' watches: all are sports watches of a sort.

Any doubts that Montblanc had about out-and-out sports watches retreated with last year's 1858 Iced Sea Automatic Date, and word from its top brass is that the steel sports watch with the handmade glacier-effect dial is already its bestseller. More of those incoming, this time in green and grey.

Zenith might quote similar triumphs for its Defy and Chronomaster Sport models, brand rejuvenators both, but it's the company's freshly conceived, thick-set Pilot collection that catches the eye this year. As Zenith reminds us, it trademarked the use of the word "pilot" on a watch dial in 1904, and has remained the only watch brand with the rights to use the word on its dials.

Talking of pilots, long before Neil Armstrong dropped on to the lunar surface wearing a Speedmaster, Omega's trophy watch was a pure sports chronograph, as we're encouraged to recall by the Speedmaster Super Racing, a next-generation mechanical device that's accurate to a rapier 0 to +2 seconds a day, smashing the chronometer rating of -4/+6, making it look like an outmoded means of establishing chronometric excellence.

One of the Speedmaster's great rivals is TAG Heuer's Carrera, which enters its seventh decade with new references; the pick of the bunch is the Carrera 60th Anniversary. Only 600 of those to come, which doesn't seem sporting, given its panda dial and glassbox crystal will be catnip to vintage Carrera design lovers.

Not all sports watches come in steel, a point proved both by Chopard's first Alpine Eagle in 18-carat yellow gold, and Panerai's Submersible S Brabus Verde Militare Edition in a stealthy, lightweight black composite material called Carbotech.

It would be just as myopic to say a sports watch can't be complicated; see Vacheron Constantin's Overseas Moon Phase Retrograde Date, a deliciously proportioned slice of haute horlogerie encased in a hardy layer of steel, and Audemars Piguet's thumping Royal Oak Offshore Selfwinding Flying Tourbillon Chronograph.

Bremont's steely Supernova bracelet watch landed late last year but still deserves a mention here, as does Breitling, which continues its enthusiasm for classic cars with the Top Time Ford Thunderbird.

Gerald Charles, the fast-rising Swiss independent, just about embraces the British summer with its Maestro GC Sport Grass, inspired not by New York's spiralling recreational habit but by Wimbledon's playing surface. Some proper exertion all round then. ■

Special additions make the grade

By **TRACEY LLEWELLYN**

AT TIME OF writing, Audemars Piguet has thrown down a horological gauntlet in the form of the Code 11.59 Ultra-Complication Universelle RD#4. Housed within a wearable 42mm case, the automatic Calibre 1000 claims a breathtaking 23 chiming, timing and calendar complications. But while Audemars Piguet announced a show-stopping, "everything but the kitchen sink" extravaganza, other watchmakers have channelled their complicated ambition in a more focused way.

Proving its heritage goes beyond Moon and Bond watches, Omega is celebrating its long history in minute repeaters and split-second timekeeping. The retro Olympic 1932 Chrono Chime and the sporty Speedmaster Chrono Chime—both powered by the Calibre 1932 made in collaboration with Blancpain—combine a rattrapante, tenth-of-a-second chronograph with a minute repeater that chimes the times recorded by the chronograph.

Celebrating its original watch, the Radiomir, in 2023, Panerai has introduced an annual calendar into the family—the watch needs to be manually reset on March 1 each year. The day and date are shown in a window at 3 o'clock, while the months are indicated on the rehaut. Befitting the noble complication, the watch is made in Panerai's proprietary Goldtech and has a chic blue sun-brushed dial.

Always in fashion, perpetual calendars that indicate day, date, month and often phases of the moon, while taking leap years into account, will not need resetting until 2100. (The Gregorian calendar dictates that this will not be a leap year.) This year sees Piaget add a perpetual to its Polo collection for the first time. Drawing on its experience in ultra-thin movements, the 4mm Calibre 1255P with micro rotor enables the 42mm case of the Polo Perpetual Calendar Ultra-Thin to remain just 8.65mm high.

The retrograde display, featuring a hand that moves around a segment of the dial before jumping back to the beginning, makes several appearances in 2023. Vacheron Constantin has introduced the function, first seen in the brand's wristwatches in the 1920s, across various collections (see p66), including the Traditionnelle Tourbillon Retrograde Date Openface. Combining this classic complication with a contemporary design, the retrograde date runs in a large arc from 9 to 3 o'clock, balanced by a large tourbillon at 6.

While Vacheron's retrograde is utilitarian, Van Cleef & Arpels has a more poetic delivery in the latest Lady Féerie made in myriad shades of pink. A 33mm rose-gold case frames a dial with a jumping digital hour and a retrograde minute scale—the precise time is indicated by a fairy's wand.

From travelling complications to wandering ones, at the end of last year, F.P.Journe completed his Vagabondage

FROM TOP:
Audemars Piguet Code 11.59 Ultra-Complication Universelle RD#4; F.P.Journe Vagabondage; Omega Olympic 1932 Chrono Chime; Piaget Polo Perpetual Calendar Ultra-Thin; Montblanc 1858 The Unveiled Timekeeper Minerva LE 100; Chopard L.U.C Quattro Spirit 25 Fifth Avenue Edition; Jaeger-LeCoultre Tribute Reverso Duoface Tourbillom; Oris ProPilot Altimeter.

ALWAYS IN FASHION, **PERPETUAL CALENDARS** *THAT INDICATE DAY, DATE, MONTH AND OFTEN PHASES OF THE MOON, WHILE TAKING* **LEAP YEARS** *INTO ACCOUNT, WILL NOT NEED* **RESETTING** *UNTIL* **2100**.

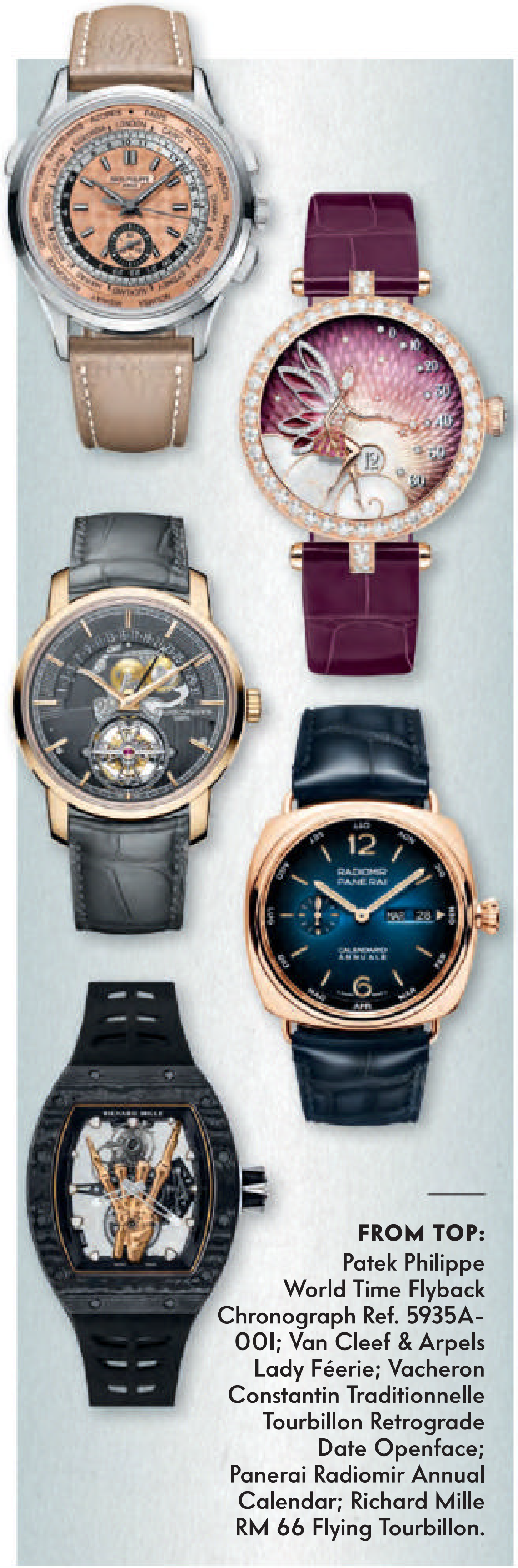
Gold trilogy with the Vagabondage I Gold. Rather than a facsimile of the platinum version from 2004, the watch has an updated manually wound, rose-gold movement—Calibre 1504.2—within a 45.2 x 37.5mm case. In the 18 years since its release, the Vagabondage with wandering jump hours has lost none of its intrigue or appeal.

Chopard, too, has turned to a jumping hour complication for the unique L.U.C Quattro Spirit 25 Fifth Avenue Edition to celebrate the opening of its new New York boutique. The 40mm rose-gold case frames a grand feu enamel interpretation of the Statue of Liberty. The piece is powered by the Poinçon de Genève L.U.C 98.06-L movement with four barrels that provide up to eight days of power reserve.

While every year introduces a slew of new chronographs, this year there is something different from Montblanc in the form of the 1858 The Unveiled Timekeeper Minerva LE 100. Montblanc's high-end movement manufacture Minerva is famed for its chronographs, but this year's star is a world first as the start, stop and reset functions are all operated via the rotating bezel.

Patek Philippe has also improved on the standard chronograph by combining a world-time function and a flyback mechanism in the Ref. 5935A-001. A new take on the model that debuted in 2016, this version is a rarity in the world of Patek, namely a steel-cased complication. And Patek is not the only brand thinking of travel. Jaeger-LeCoultre's manually wound, pink-gold Reverso Tribute Duoface Tourbillon features two time-zones shown via the twin faces of the swivelling watch head. The tourbillon is visible on both sides, while the home-time dial also has a day/night indicator represented by a sun and moon.

One of horology's most passionate debates is whether a tourbillon can be considered a complication. The rigid answer is that it can't. Put simply, a complication is any feature beyond the display of hours, minutes and seconds. So, while a simple date is considered a complication, even the most complex tourbillon is not, as it is just an addition to the escapement. However, rules are meant to be broken, in this case by Richard Mille's new RM 66 Flying Tourbillon. Pure rock 'n' roll, the openworked dial has a skeleton hand in the gesture of the devil's horns, the bony fingers flanking a flying tourbillon at 12 o'clock.



FROM TOP: Patek Philippe World Time Flyback Chronograph Ref. 5935A-001; Van Cleef & Arpels Lady Féerie; Vacheron Constantin Traditionnelle Tourbillon Retrograde Date Openface; Panerai Radiomir Annual Calendar; Richard Mille RM 66 Flying Tourbillon.

Finally, a contender for the most unusual watch function of the year has to be the new Oris ProPilot Altimeter with 3D-printed, carbon-fibre case. While the altimeter module itself does not add anything to the timekeeping, it does provide adventurers with a means to determine the distance of a point above sea level, should it be needed. ■

Making dreams a ritzy reality

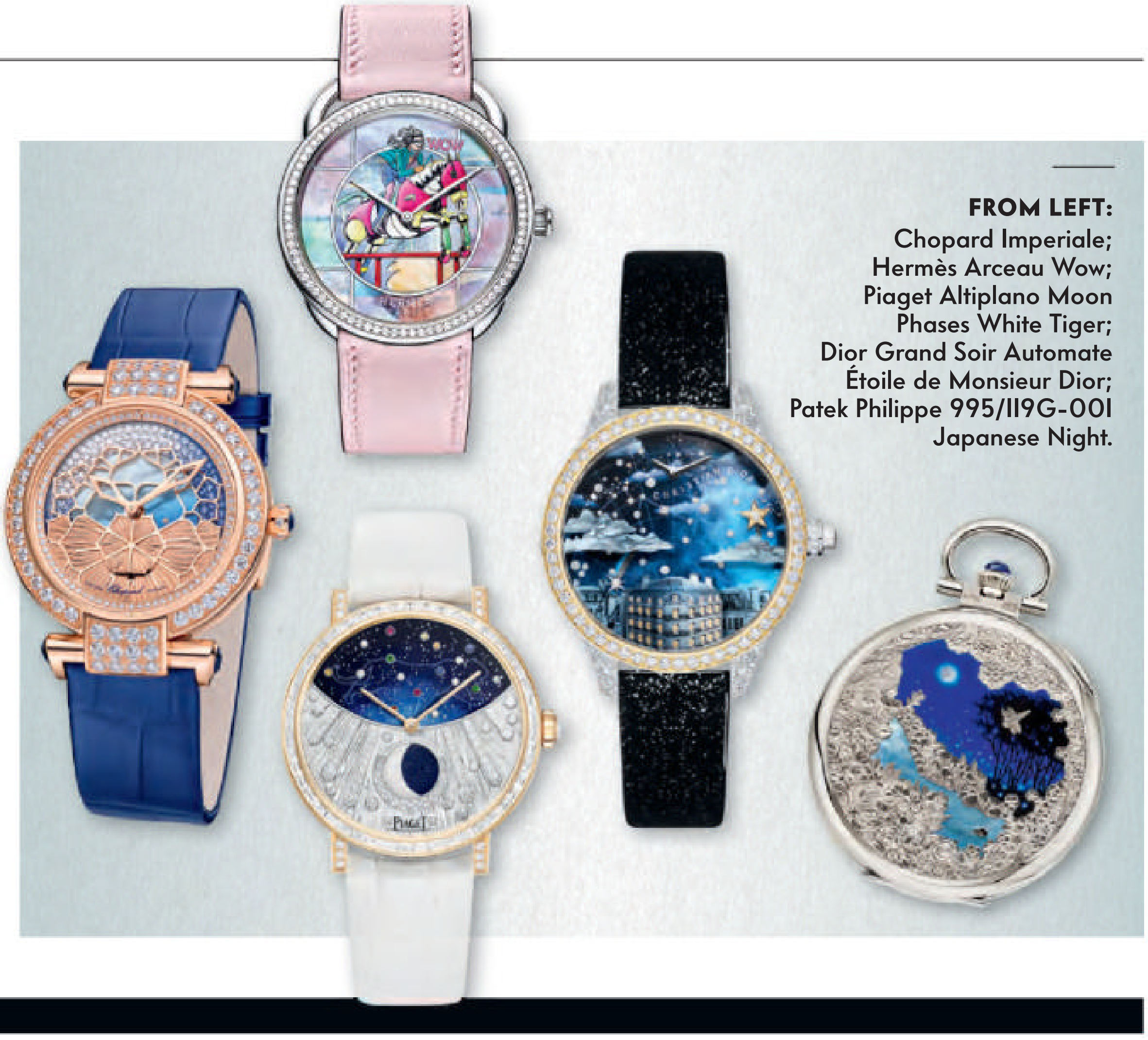
By **KIM PARKER**

JUST AS COUTURE gowns signify the pinnacle of a fashion designer's creativity, métiers d'art timepieces showcase the horological world's rarest savoir-faire, combining complex artisanal skills such as enamelling, marquetry, miniature painting and engraving. This year's elaborate timepieces are no exception, with the heavens proving a rich source of inspiration for watchmakers.

Take Dior's debut automaton watch, which pays homage to its founder's passion for all things astrological. The Grand Soir Automate Étoile de Monsieur Dior portrays Christian Dior's beloved flagship at 30 Avenue Montaigne in engraved and printed mother-of-pearl, with glowing windows picked out in textured brass. Above it, tiny diamond stars are arranged in the constellation of Aquarius, Dior's birth sign, with two larger stars at the 3 and 8 o'clock positions representing the couturier's lucky numbers. Thanks to a specially constructed mechanism, these can be sent shooting upwards into the nebulous, pearly clouds at the touch of a white gold pusher atop the crown.

From a magical night in Paris to nightfall in Japan, Patek Philippe has dedicated its one-of-a-kind 995/119G-001 pocket watch to the serenity of a moonlit Japanese garden. For the dial, a view of branches silhouetted against a starry sky has been meticulously hand-painted on to cobalt enamel, echoing the rich hue of a sapphire cabochon on the crown. Flip it over, and the white-gold caseback reveals a carved mother-of-pearl brook surrounded by flowers, shrubs and a dragonfly, all engraved in low relief and lit by a luminous full moon.

Two years in development, a quartet of Piaget's automatic Altiplano Moon Phases watches has been created with master enameller and long-time collaborator Anita Porchet, embodying four seasonal views of the night sky. The upper dial of each 36mm piece is crafted with translucent, ultra-thin films of enamel set with coloured gems and fine gold thread to form a different Chinese constellation. In contrast, the crescent-shaped lower dial is engraved with the brand's signature Palace Décor, embellished with "rays" of gradated sapphires and a moonphase window ringed with white diamonds.

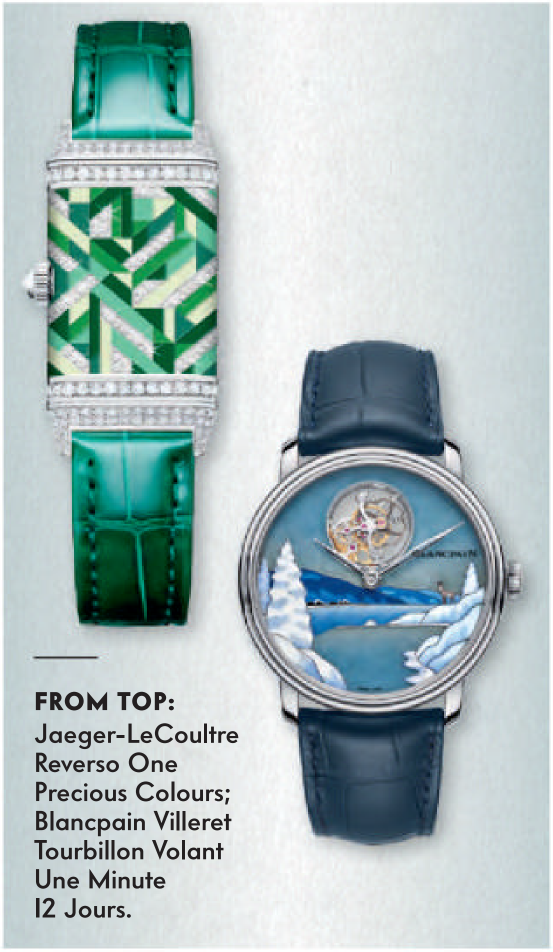


FROM LEFT:
Chopard Imperiale;
Hermès Arceau Wow;
Piaget Altiplano Moon Phases White Tiger;
Dior Grand Soir Automate Étoile de Monsieur Dior;
Patek Philippe 995/119G-001 Japanese Night.

MÉTIERS D'ART *TIMEPIECES SHOWCASE THE HOROLOGICAL WORLD'S RAREST* **SAVOIR-FAIRE**, *WITH THE* **HEAVENS** *PROVING A RICH SOURCE OF INSPIRATION.*

The refined skills of goldsmithing and decorative enamelling again feature on Blancpain's novel Villeret Tourbillon Volant Une Minute 12 Jours. Japanese enamels are layered to depict a wintry Mont Tendre in the gloaming, as seen from the shores of Lake Joux, with the tourbillon hovering at the 12 o'clock position like a vast celestial body. The first of four unique timepieces which will depict Blancpain's home region in Switzerland, its cloisonné outlines are created using minute gold wire, while silver paillons beneath the enamel imbue the scene with sparkling highlights.

Meanwhile, Jaeger-LeCoultre's in-house artisans display virtuoso command of the champlevé enamelling technique in the Reverso One Precious Colours in white gold. An Art Deco-inspired pattern has been carved on to the back of the famous swivelling white gold caseback, then painstakingly built up with tiers of aqua, jade and forest-tinted lacquer, before a total of 274 white diamonds are set in angular rows across the caseback and lugs. The juxtaposition of textures creates a mesmerising effect, like a geometric aurora borealis on the wrist.



FROM TOP:
Jaeger-LeCoultre Reverso One Precious Colours;
Blancpain Villeret Tourbillon Volant Une Minute 12 Jours.

For Chopard, immortalising the ethereal beauty of the sky in ethical rose gold and gemstones is the ultimate test of its craftsmanship. Its 25 limited-edition Imperiale timepieces feature an engraved gold lotus flower, regarded as a symbol of the sun by ancient Egyptians, on top of an ever-changing firmament represented by a gem-set mother-of-pearl disc. A self-winding mechanism developed in-house gently rotates the disc throughout the day, so a morning sky of white diamonds gives way to an evening of cerulean sapphires and twinkling rose gold stars.

Leaving our own atmosphere behind, Hermès artisans looked to infinity for the new self-winding Arceau Wow; the 38mm watch reinterprets a silk scarf design by Ugo Bienvenu showing a cartoon equestrian. The mother-of-pearl dial is hand-painted on one side to create a translucent background, and the central motif of a space-age showjumper is applied to the other side in bright pastels, a process which takes 35 hours. Only 24 pieces of each colourway (blue or pink) will be made, so they are destined to become collectible—no astrologers necessary to forecast that. ■

FINDING YOUR MÉTIER

From intricate enamel to minuscule marquetry, the techniques known collectively as métiers d'art are at the apex of the watchmaker's craft. *On Time*'s panel of experts select the finest examples

1 | CARLOS ALONSO

Director, Tiempo de Relojes

In watches with métiers d'art we sometimes overestimate the originality and the difficulty of the technique versus the artistic result. Both are incredibly impressive in the **Romain Gauthier Logical One Empire's Secret**. Artisans at the Olivier Vaucher atelier have hand-painted and micro-engraved stunning reproductions of Chinese artist Zhang Zeduan's scenes of the Song Dynasty.

2 | JASEM AL ZERAEI

Watch collector

The **Patek Philippe Falcon Hunting Ref. 5077** remains my favourite. The use of enamel on the dial to depict a falconer hunting on a horse in the desert is beautiful, and it relates to my Arabic background. I believe it is one of the best executed showcases of art in watchmaking.

3 | GEORGE BAMFORD

Founder, Bamford Watch Department

The beautiful **anOrdain Model 1 Blue Fumé** with its oceanic iridescent blue enamelling (which the makers do themselves in Glasgow) is incredible. To think this one brand is taking on the Swiss and the Japanese fumé dial-making world. This watch is a must-see—only in the flesh can you truly appreciate it as it comes alive. The craftsmanship on the dial is some of the best I've seen. It takes your breath away. The story of how anOrdain makes its fumé dials is fascinating, as is the richness of colour the atelier achieves. The watch embraces modernity while still acknowledging the past.

4 | VIVIENNE BECKER

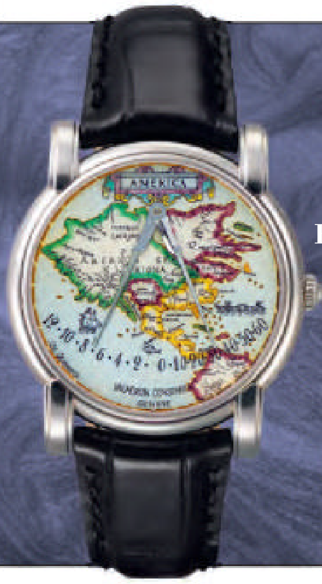
Journalist, author and *V.F. On Time* contributor

Piaget's new orientalist métiers d'art **Altiplano Moonphase** is out of this world. A gem-studded deep blue night sky, by enamel artist Anita Porchet, traces Chinese constellations against which, at nightfall, the forms of their four Guardians—azure dragon, red bird, white tiger and black turtle—appear in the sky. Below, moonlit rays of diamonds, with sapphires or garnets, illuminate Piaget's signature Palace Décor engraved gold.

5 | ALEXANDRE BIGLER

Vice president and head of watches, Christie's Asia Pacific

The abilities of the craftspeople who create exceptional works of art with enamel can only be wondered at. Made in very small editions, enamel dials are iconic, highly collectable and wonders to look at. The art is thought to have originated in 14th-century China, and includes several techniques such as Grand Feu cloisonné, flinqué and miniature painting to create a magical decorative effect. My choice would be the **Patek Philippe Ref. 2523J**, with its cloisonné map dial, as it is such a rare and unique timepiece.



"I AM PARTICULARLY DRAWN TO THIS ENAMEL DIAL, RENDERED FROM A MAP CREATED BY MERCATOR IN THE 16TH CENTURY."

NATE BORGELT

6 | NATE BORGELT

Head of watches, Americas, Bonhams

The métiers d'art version of the **Vacheron Constantin Mercator** falls into a line of watches that centre on exploration and astronomy. Alongside the Tribute to Great Explorers and celestial watches like the Copernicus Celestial Spheres with a grand feu enamel dial, the Mercator takes the unique retrograde time display combined with cartographer's calibre hands and pairs it with hand-painted maps depicting different regions around the world. The example I am particularly drawn to is the limited-edition **Mercator America** from 2003, made in only 10 examples and featuring a multicoloured enamel dial rendered from a map of the Americas created by the cartographer Gerardus Mercator in the 16th century.

7 | PAUL BOUTROS

Head of watches, Americas, Phillips

Patek Philippe Rare Handcrafts, time-only wristwatches with cloisonné enamel dials made by Anita Porchet, are extraordinary. Each one is unique, with the dials serving as a canvas to showcase artistic scenes using vibrant colours, such as 2022's exquisite **Zebra Ellipse**. Signed with her initials, the watch exemplifies the very best of Swiss craftsmanship.

8 | GISBERT BRUNNER

Author and co-founder, Uhrenkosmos.com

The **Van Cleef & Arpels Lady Arpels Heures Florales Cerisier** is an ornate and artistic mechanical masterpiece that magically draws

BIGLER: CHRISTIE'S. BORGELT AND DARRACOTT: BONHAMS. BOUTROS: PHILLIPS. CERBONESCHI: STÉPHANIE PAGE. CHU: WRISTCHECK. CORDER: ITP MEDIA GROUP. DE BURTON: DOM FRASER. DUGGAN: DAVIDDUGGANWATCHES.CO.UK. LIQUID BACKGROUNDS THROUGHOUT: GETTY IMAGES.

attention to itself. From a distance, a flower-filled dial catches the eye. A closer look reveals a floral landscape with 12 miniature flowers. A total of seven blossoms opened during the aperitif. If the first course of the dinner arrives, there are eight others. The minutes can also be read through a sapphire window on the side. A real ornament for feminine wrists.

9 | ISABELLE CERBONESCHI

Editor in chief, *ALL-I-C* magazine

Since April 2022, we no longer say "What time is it?" but "What flower is it?" **Van Cleef & Arpels Lady Arpels Heures Florales Cerisier** has hours indicated by the blossoming of mechanical flowers scattered on the dial. An additional module makes it possible, opening as many flowers as there are hours. And the minutes are displayed laterally inside an aperture. Absolute poetry within a timepiece.

10 | CARSON CHAN

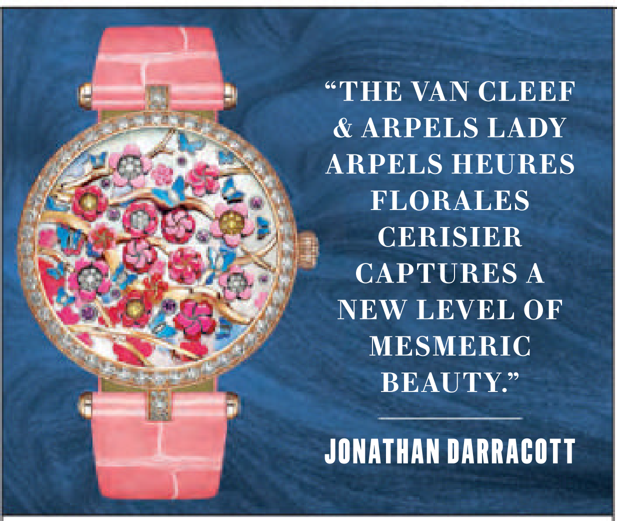
Collector and chief adviser, Fondation de la Haute Horologerie

The 2022 **Cartier Crash Tigrée Métamorphoses** draws my attention to the watch design and its aesthetic; I don't need to know what movement is driving the watch as the appearance alone is captivating enough. Decorated by a skilled enameller, the pattern continues from the case into the dial, blending gem-setting with enamelling technique—seldom seen done with such élan. The result is simply stunning. Good luck getting one—it was limited to 50 pieces.

11 | AUSTEN CHU

Founder and CEO, Wristcheck

My current favourite métiers d'art watch would be the **Kari Voutilainen Ji-Ku**, which bears a gorgeous dial crafted by one of the greatest lacquer artists from Japan, Tatsuo Kitamura, which utilises gold leaf, gold dust, abalone shell and green turban shell. It takes many months to craft a single dial.



"THE VAN CLEEF & ARPELS LADY ARPELS HEURES FLORALES CERISIER CAPTURES A NEW LEVEL OF MESMERIC BEAUTY."

JONATHAN DARRACOTT

12 | ROB CORDER

Co-founder, WatchPro

When it comes to métiers d'art watches, eight out of my top 10 favourites would be from **Van Cleef & Arpels**. Top of the list has to be the whimsical and poetic **Lady Arpels Pont des Amoureux Hiver**, with two lovers meeting on a bridge over the river Seine in winter. It is an exquisite mechanically driven work of art.

13 | JONATHAN DARRACOTT

Global head of watches, Bonhams

Métiers d'art watches are a fascinating branch of the watchmaker's art combining the decorative and the mechanical arts. **Van Cleef & Arpels Lady Arpels Heures Florales Cerisier** demonstrates extraordinary automation and captures a new level of mesmeric beauty.

14 | SIMON DE BURTON

Journalist and author; *V.F. On Time* contributor

When it comes to a combination of artistic interpretation and outright horological weirdness, few métiers d'art wristwatches can hold a candle to **Les Masques**, launched by **Vacheron Constantin** in 2007. Each had a dial decorated with a miniature interpretation of a different tribal mask from the collection of the Barbier-Mueller Museum in Geneva, with the first set featuring masks from China, Alaska, the Congo and Japan. Production was limited to just 25 sets, each costing more than £200,000, with three different sets being released annually over the course of three years.

15 | JAMES DOWLING

Journalist and author; *V.F. On Time* contributor

In the 1950s a small Geneva company, named after its owner Charles (Carlo) Poluzzi, developed a method of producing wristwatch dials in cloisonné enamel. They were available to any watch manufacturer, but they seem to have mainly been purchased by Patek Philippe, Vacheron Constantin and Rolex. Each dial was unique, as they were all handmade, with tiny variations in each example. My personal favourite is the **Tropical Oasis** dial on the **Patek Philippe Ref. 2481**, which is probably the pinnacle of design and craftsmanship.

16 | DAVID DUGGAN

Owner, David Duggan Watches

The **Patek Philippe Falcon Head Ref. 5177G-024** has a spectacular skill of marquetry that can only be enacted to this standard by a handful of people in the watch world. The bird, composed of 168 separate pieces of wood from 20 different species of tree, is created entirely by one marquetry expert. The watch is a modern horological masterpiece.

17 | JACK FORSTER

Global editorial director, Watchbox.com

My favourite métiers d'art watch was both very difficult and very easy to pick; difficult because there are so many memorable possibilities. However, the ones which I think have really stood out are the **Parmigiani Fleurier Les Roses Carrées** wristwatches, which were based on the unique pocket watch of the same name launched in December 2021. The wristwatches are marvellous examples of a combination of engraving and enamelling techniques, along with a stunning movement that's a work of art in itself.

18 | MARCO GABELLA

Chairman and publisher, *Watchonista*

With the métiers d'art **Tributes to Great Civilisations, Vacheron Constantin** released four masterpieces of craftsmanship. I found the **Lion de Darius** truly compelling. It had a vibrantly coloured stone marquetry dial background that resembles the glazed bricks of the palace of Darius the Great in Susa, on show at the Louvre. A remarkable achievement.

19 | JOHN GOLDBERGER

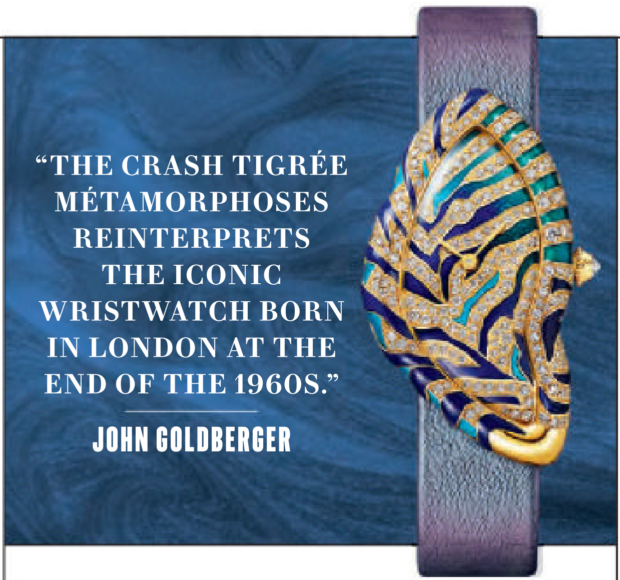
Collector

During Watches & Wonders 2022 in Geneva, I visited the **Cartier** booth and I wore on my wrist the incredible **Crash Tigrée Métamorphoses**, a reinterpretation of the iconic wristwatch born in London at the end of the 1960s from the creative mind of Jean-Jacques Cartier. To create the present wristwatch, Cartier's artisans used a compendium of crafts: gold engraving, enamelling and diamond-setting. Seeking inspiration from the wildlife of Africa in painterly hues of turquoise, green and midnight blue, the new Crash Tigrée is truly a piece of art. Cartier offers this complete freedom of interpretation by using the richness of its expertise and its stylistic grammar: the art of jewellery, combined with enamel at the highest level.

20 | KRISTIAN HAAGEN

Photojournalist

Having had the unique opportunity to walk through an empty Louvre and learn about the sculptures that have inspired the **Vacheron Constantin Tribute to Great Civilisations**, the **Lion de Darius** has become my favourite métiers d'art timepiece. The impressive dial is skilfully made of glazed bricks bound with lime mortar and truly is an art piece for the wrist.



> "THE CRASH TIGRÉE MÉTAMORPHOSES REINTERPRETS THE ICONIC WRISTWATCH BORN IN LONDON AT THE END OF THE 1960S."
>
> JOHN GOLDBERGER

21 | BETH HANNAWAY

Head of fine watches and jewellery, Harrods

Van Cleef & Arpels' poetic complications are always captivating with their romantic movements and métiers d'art finish, but it's the latest addition to the family that really captures my attention, the **Van Cleef & Arpels Lady Arpels Heures Florales**. These highly innovative creations display the time through the delicate opening and closing of miniature painted, three-dimensional sculpted flowers, encompassing 166 elements to ensure the delicate petals are timed to perfection. Wow!

22 | ANDREW HILDRETH

Watch editor, *I-M Intelligent Magazine*

The **Kari Voutilainen Ji-Ku** is stunning in every respect. The movement is Kari's proprietary world-time reference, and the case is made from platinum, but the unique dial is most extraordinary. In Japan, where the ancient art of lacquer is revered, Tatsuo Kitamura is a living legend artisan who took several months to manufacture the artwork by combining the techniques of *saiei maki-e* (literally, sprinkled picture with gold or silver dust) and *somata zaiku* (a technique for elaborate patterns by combining fine pieces of seashells and ultra-thin gold and silver sheets). It is a creative supernova captured in a diminutive disk. The watch deservedly won the Artistic Crafts Watch Prize at the Grand Prix d'Horlogerie de Genève 2022.

23 | SAM HINES

Managing director, Loupe This

The greatest watch I have ever seen in more than two decades is the **Jehan Cremsdorff**. The Cremsdorff can be considered the benchmark for all métiers d'art skills today and is arguably the greatest watch of the 17th century. The Cremsdorff incorporates skills of a watchmaker, goldsmith, jeweller and enameller, uniting almost all of these skills in one single watch. Made circa 1650, the Cremsdorff was created at a time when these techniques were still being discovered, refined and perfected.

24 | HOROLOGY ANCIENNE

Father and son watch collectors

At the turn of the century, we commissioned a masterpiece from the last grand master of miniature enamel painting—the venerable **Suzanne Rohr**. To us she is the greatest miniature enameller of all time. The piece in question is a double-sided yellow-gold pocket watch. We designed the dial while Philippe Stern, then president of **Patek Philippe**, and Madame Rohr chose their favourite painting for each side. For Stern this was *Maternity* by Alfred van Muyden, and for Madame Rohr this was *Reading* by Pierre-Auguste Renoir—a celebration of womanhood! The piece took almost four years to complete. As a tribute to its importance, it was displayed in the Patek Museum for more than a decade. This is the most important enamel pocket watch we know of.

25 | KEN KESSLER

Watch journalist; *V.F. On Time* contributor

Twenty years ago at SIHH 2003, **Jaeger LeCoultre**—reminding us that a hand-enamelled miniature of a famous painting is a premier métiers d'art—showed four **Reversos** with stunning reproductions on their casebacks. They chose to honour my all-time favourite painter, Tamara de Lempicka,

GABELLA: WATCHONISTA CREATIVE STUDIO. HAAGEN: ANDREAS JOHANSSON. HILDRETH: NANDO MACHADO/PANEL EIGHT PHOTOGRAPHS. HOROLOGY ANCIENNE: HOROLOGY ANCIENNE. KESSLER: DOUG SCHNEIDER. KOULLAPIS: MICHAL SOLARSKI/WATCH CLUB. LI: EDIPRESSE MEDIA/KING FUNG. MODIG: STIAN FOSS. PALUMBO: WHAT'S ON HER WRIST/BART GORIN.

an Art Deco icon like the Reverso itself. When I saw **Tamara in the Green Bugatti**, I swore to acquire one. Alas, copyright issues cancelled the series, so I can only imagine it resides in the company's museum.

26 | JUSTIN KOULLAPIS

Partner, The Watch Club;
***V.F. On Time* contributor**

For craft imbued with vibrance, skill and imagination, I look no further than **anOrdain**. This young Scottish outfit produces beautiful enamel dials—for example, the Plum Fumé—that pair equally with a dinner jacket or dungarees. Bonus points for honesty too, as they call their dials what they always were, for centuries: enamel. Simple and direct, there is no hand-wavy "émail grand feu", nor other affectation. And if you prefer a handmade movement under your anOrdain enamel dial, now you can—just get yourself on to the Struthers waiting list.

27 | NAZANIN LANKARANI

Journalist and author;
***V.F. On Time* contributor**

A standout of 2023 is the **Adam & Eve Quantum** from **Qannati Objet d'Art**. The world's first Bahraini luxury watch brand was founded in 2018 by Mahmood Qannati, whose life's passion was to make métiers d'art pieces inspired by Mesopotamian culture. A young brand dedicated to well-made handcrafted objects—that gets my vote.

28 | SEAN LI

Editorial director,
Blackbird Watch Manual

I am again drawn to **Van Cleef & Arpels**, which has created a spectacular marriage of technique and artistry with its **Lady Arpels Heures Florales**. It's an incredible combination of the finest craftsmanship, animated by an innovative and complex time display, all emerging from the initial dream of a floral clock by the famed botanist Carl Linnaeus.

29 | MING LIU

Journalist; *V.F. On Time* contributor

I'm going to cheat here and select a trio of favourites: the **Jaeger-LeCoultre Reverso Tribute Enamel Hidden Treasures**. I adore the theme of hidden secrets told through these watches replicating paintings by Gustave Courbet, Vincent van Gogh and Gustav Klimt that are believed to be lost forever, either through an art heist, sequestered in an attic, or undiscovered beneath another painting.

30 | TRACEY LLEWELLYN

Editor, *Telegraph Time*, *WatchPro*;
***V.F. On Time* contributor**

If watches are as much about emotion as they are about time, then the **Vacheron Constantin Queen** (part of the 2013 Florilège trilogy) is a hands-down winner for me. The dial guilloché and Grand Feu enamel by Anita Porchet are stunning, but it was the launch itself that made this watch a winner. A dinner at Kew Gardens with access to Robert John Thornton's 1799 book *Temple of Flora*—which inspired the watch, and is considered by many to be the greatest book on flowers ever created—was a once-in-a-lifetime experience.

31 | TAKESHI MATSUYAMA

Watchmaking historian

My favourite is the **Moritz Grossmann Tremblage**. It is a truly artisan-made watch with a very beautiful face and is produced in small numbers.

"I ADORE THE THEME OF HIDDEN SECRETS IN THESE WATCHES THAT REPLICATE PAINTINGS BELIEVED TO BE LOST FOREVER."

MING LIU

32 | JEAN PAUL MENICUCCI

Leather craftsman and strap maker

I'd have to choose the **Corum Feather** in white gold from the 1970s with its incredible peacock-feather dial with many shades of green and blue. It is a very cool watch to wear with jeans or with a tuxedo. Despite it not having a cloisonné dial, which it would have if made by a true master goldsmith, I still have a strong emotional connection to this watch due to its craftsmanship and originality.

33 | ANDERS MODIG

Journalist and photographer;
***V.F. On Time* contributor**

I like the **Kari Voutilainen Ji-Ku** for which the Finnish master watchmaker teamed up with Japanese lacquer artist Tatsuo Kitamura, who spent several months creating a sublime, radiating dial from gold dust, gold leaf and shells. I love the dedication to keeping the ancestral *urushi* lacquer technique alive on a contemporary timepiece.

34 | BARBARA PALUMBO

Watch and jewellery editor;
***V.F. On Time* contributor**

It took months, but by March of 2016 I had enough pennies saved up to attend my first Baselworld. It was there I saw my first métiers d'art timepiece in the flesh: the **Arnold & Son True Beat Dragon Limited Edition**. It took my breath away, and to this day, that moment lives rent-free in my mind and is recalled when anyone mentions artistic watches.

35 | LAURENT PICCIOTTO

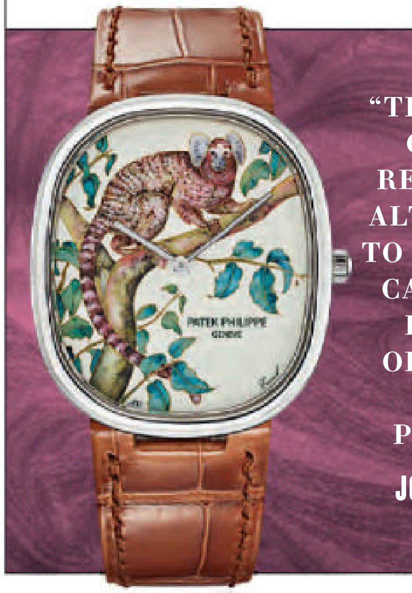
Founder and owner, Chronopassion

For me, the **Ralph Lauren Western Cushion Engraved Rose Gold Ref. RLR0911700** demonstrates exceptional craftsmanship. Each watch is distinguished by its incredible hand-engraving by a Manhattan craftsman known for creating the silver spurs on Ralph Lauren's boots. The buckles of the bracelets also reproduce the engravings of vintage belts collected by the designer. The metal's aged look is the work of a jeweller who has developed a process of polishing, painting and waxing the metal to create this effect on each dial. As for the leather, the cowhide straps were first hammered with floral patterns by an artisan in Texas, then sent to Italy to be hand-tanned and coated before being assembled in Belgium. The watch is a tribute to craftsmanship, which was what Ralph Lauren wanted to magnify in this Western collection that celebrated the brand's 50th anniversary. "With their raw elegance and authenticity, these watches embody the American tradition of combining beauty and functionality," says Lauren. These are watches that are meant to be worn and then passed on as a legacy.

36 | BILL PRINCE

Journalist and author of *Royal Oak: From Iconoclast to Icon* (Assouline)

Besides displaying artistry at the most granular level, embellished watches have a habit of reflecting our own fascinations in a way that transcends the nature of the work. Case in point: the limited series, **Vacheron Constantin Tribute to Great Civilisations**, of four métiers d'art watches produced in concert with the Louvre. Each pays tribute to an ancient civilisation (Hellenic, Persian, Roman) but my favourite displays the Grand Sphinx of Tanis etched in carved gold appliqué against a deep blue enamel dial. This year it seems all roads lead to Cairo—with the opening of the new Grand Egyptian Museum due later in 2023, this would be the perfect piece to accompany a trip to the Al Giza Desert.



"THE ELLIPSE CASE IS A REFRESHING ALTERNATIVE TO THE ROUND CASES WITH ENAMELS OFFERED BY PATEK PHILIPPE."

JOHN REARDON

37 | AHMED RAHMAN

Watch collector

Since the beginning of civilisation human beings have always travelled in search of adventure and knowledge, a quest which was suddenly thwarted by the Covid pandemic. However, now that travel is once again flourishing, I dedicate my choice to the genius and the beauty that is the **Patek Philippe World Time Cloisonné Ref. 5131/1P-001**. The Louis Cottier-style platinum-cased watch is based on the Patek calibre 240 HU and is powered by an automatic micro-rotor movement with a world-time module on top. As an added bonus, the watch comes fitted with a classic "brick"-style platinum bracelet, giving it an imposing heft on the wrist. But its real beauty lies in the enamelled dial centre, which depicts a world map as seen from the North Pole, comprised of intricately shaped gold wires forming the outline of the various continents filled with exquisite shades of green, blue and browns. The details of the cloisonné dial are a visual feast.

38 | JOHN REARDON

Founder, Collectability LLC

My favorite métiers d'art watch is the **Patek Philippe Ref. 5738/50G-018**. This miniature piece has all the ingredients imaginable for a modern work of art. First, the Ellipse case is a refreshing alternative to the more common round cases with enamels offered by Patek Philippe, making this watch a rarity of rarities. The enamel itself is signed "AP", for Anita Porchet. Very few Patek cases and dials are personalised by the actual artisans and this signature is a sign of respect to one of the greatest living enamellers. The greens and browns of the subject matter lend themselves well to the 1970s Ellipse aesthetic.

39 | JULIAN SCHAERER

Managing director and watch expert, Antiquorum Geneva

My favorite métiers d'art watch is without a doubt the cloisonné-dial **Patek Philippe Ref. 2523**. This world-time wristwatch features two crowns in order to rotate the inner disc combined with a beautiful polychrome cloisonné enamel medallion featuring a map of the US, Europe and Asia, depending on the version, or a plain simple blue enamel centre.

40 | DARYN F SCHNIPPER

Chairman, international watch division, Sotheby's

For me, the finest métiers d'art dial is undoubtedly the **Patek Philippe Rodeo Ref. 5089-070**. The watch embodies the techniques used by Genevan artisans on watch dials of the past. Remarkably, hundreds of minuscule pieces of wood are cut to capture the movement of the cowboy on his bucking bronco.

41 | ABDUL HAMIED SEDDIQI

Chairman, Seddiqi Holding

The **Patek Philippe Calatrava Falcon Head Ref. 5177G-024** is the first timepiece that comes to mind. The Falcon is the national bird of the United Arab Emirates and symbolises the nation's strength and heritage. Accented with a wood marquetry design, the timepiece is a testament to artistic heritage and design.

42 | CLAUDE SFEIR

Watch collector

I really like enamelling, because the dial is like a painting. And the watch is like the frame of the painting. For us in vintage collecting, an enamel dial represents 90 per cent of the

PRINCE: SUDHIR PITHWA. SCHAERER: ANTIQUORUM. SEDDIQI: OLIVER MARSHALL DORAN. SCHNIPPER: SOTHEBY'S. STRUTHERS: ANDY PILSBURY. SWITHINBANK: JAY ROWDEN. WALLNER: AVA VAN OSDOL. WEMPE: CHRISTIAN BARZ. WIND: CHRIS COE.

"THE DIAL OF THE HERMÈS ARCEAU ROBE DU SOIR HAS 3,500 HAND-APPLIED LEATHER 'TILES'."

REBECCA STRUTHERS

personality and value of a watch. And if you compare dials to paintings—such as a Picasso—the enamel of the watches became much more valuable. My favourites are the ones with a fine gold wire that the artists position before filling and firing the enamel. This wire reveals the coloured enamel powders. Sometimes, on Patek Philippe vintage clocks, for example, the wire is 30 to 40 metres long, and always in yellow gold, which is more flexible to work with and to turn. My choice is the **Patek Philippe World Time Geneva Harbour Ref. 5131/175G**, produced to celebrate the 175th anniversary of Patek Philippe in 2014.

43 | DANIEL SOMLO

Director, Somlo London

Breguet pioneered the use of guilloché for watch dials, serving as both decoration and, by varying the pattern, as a way of delineating various sections of the dial. It was an achievement in both form and function. My favourite example of métiers d'art would have to be an **18th-century Breguet pocket watch** with complications and a guilloché dial.

44 | REBECCA STRUTHERS

Watchmaker and author

The **Hermès Arceau Robe du Soir** watch has stayed with me since I saw it at Grand Prix d'Horlogerie de Genève 2018 where it deservingly won the Artistic Crafts Award. The historian in me loves a mosaic, and the innovation of its dial, using 3,500 hand-applied leather "tiles", gives a subtle nod to the brand's leather-making heritage— it is a stroke of artisanal genius.

45 | JIAXIAN SU

Collector and founder, SJXWatches.com

At almost 10 cm in diameter, the **Vacheron Constantin Les Cabinotiers Westminster Sonnerie—Tribute to Johannes Vermeer** is a grand complication that reflects the keen eye of the Asian collector who commissioned it. Besides a tourbillon, it has the ultimate chiming complication—a Westminster grande sonnerie—but the centrepiece is arguably the miniature enamel reproduction (done Geneva-style, of course, by Anita Porchet) of Vermeer's *Girl with a Pearl Earring*.

46 | TOBY SUTTON

Co-founder and director, Watches of Knightsbridge

My favourite is the **Andersen Genève Celestial Voyager**. Everything about these world-time watches is perfect and the one depicting the "Sunset over Cappadocia" in cloisonné enamel is simply amazing.

47 | ROBIN SWITHINBANK

Journalist and writer; *V.F. On Time* contributor

Peering through a loupe at the GPHG-winning **Kari Voutilainen Ji-Ku** sends its dial exploding into three dimensions, like a dystopian Christopher Nolan dreamscape. The vision is the work of Japanese lacquer artist Tatsuo Kitamura, who spends months assembling the tiny, stepped layers of gold and shell. Unforgettable.

48 | BRYNN WALLNER

Journalist and founder, Dimepiece

Yeehaw! At first glance, the blissfully American **Patek Philippe Rodeo Ref. 5089-07** is created with enamel, but look closer: the intricate effect is achieved by marquetry, a decorative wood-based technique typically reserved for furniture. Originating in ancient Greece, marquetry has only recently found application in watchmaking thanks to Patek Philippe in 2008. This particular Calatrava debuted in New York City in 2017 in a limited edition of 10 for the brand's Art of Watches Grand Exhibition. It consists of 318 pieces of wood, 40 inlays and 20 different types of wood. As the fashion set continues to favour Americana (see: Bode's handcrafted menswear), this celebration of the Wild West feels aptly modern.

49 | KIM-EVA WEMPE

Owner and managing Partner, Wempe

I love travelling and I believe the **Patek Philippe World Time Geneva Harbour Ref. 5131/175G** watch is something special. A glance at my wrist shows me exactly the 24 time zones thanks to the perfect craftmanship of the manufacture calibre. In practical terms, I know immediately whether the president of Wempe New York, Ruediger Albers, is currently available. Its detailed cloisonné enamel dial makes this métiers d'art timepiece a highly coveted object. It depicts the harbour at Lake Geneva and a historic sailing boat, also known as a barque. The cloisonné enamel is the most sophisticated of all enamel techniques: a delicate gold wire measuring approximately four inches in length and only 0.004 of an inch in diameter is processed by hand, and a range of 23 opaque, transparent or opalescent enamel colours are fired 10 times in a kiln. A true masterpiece of fine watchmaking.

50 | ERIC WIND

Founder, Wind Vintage

For me, vintage wristwatches and pocket watches with cloisonné enamel dials, particularly those with maps of the world,made by the artisans of Stern Frères from their glorious period in the middle of the 20th century are unrivalled. Per square centimetre, these dials are the most valuable works of art in the world. The **Patek Philippe Ref. 605 HU** world-time pocket watch with enamel dial is a particular favourite. ■

ART HOUSE

Horology's long association with the decorative arts has taken a truly modern turn, with contemporary and street artists such as Keith Haring and Cyril Kongo pushing the aesthetic boundaries of watch design. *Nazanin Lankarani* reports

WHEN ADVANCED ENAMELLING techniques began to allow for great artworks to be painted on to watch dials in the 17th century, decorative practices became an important part of watchmaking. And in the present day, we can see the outstanding precision of Jaeger-LeCoultre's artisans, who reproduce Katsushika Hokusai's cascading waters of *The Amida Falls in the Far Reaches of the Kisokaidō Road* on to the caseback of a Reverso.

Unlike métiers d'art specialists, visual artists have long been fascinated with time, but only artists of the modern era have regarded time-measuring instruments as a medium. Dutch painters of the 17th century painted skulls and wilted flowers—but not clocks—to express their preoccupation with the passing of time, the transience of life and the inevitability of death. Only centuries later would Damien Hirst say *carpe diem* with discarded Panerai dials strewn around the canvas of a spin painting titled *Beautiful Sunflower*. "I hope the painting makes you think, we are here for a good time, not a long time," says Hirst.

It was circa 1960 when the name of an artist first appeared on a watch: Michael Z. Berger's Pablo Picasso with the 12 letters of the artist's name as hour markers. Salvador Dalí later put his moustached profile and signature on Dalí d'Or gold coins he had minted as a nod to the Louis d'Or coins of Louis XIV, an assortment of which Piaget used to produce the Dalí d'Or watches in 1967.

In the wake of the 1970s quartz crisis, at a time when utilitarian watches offered little artistic value, Nicolas Hayek, the co-founder and former chairman of Swatch, had the brilliant idea to bring art to plastic quartz-movement watches. Born in 1985, Swatch Art Special, later renamed Swatch & Art, saw well-known artists create limited runs. The first was the 140-piece Kiki Picasso Christian Chapiron Swatch, each with a portrait on the dial in a unique colour combination.

Swatch then tapped the New York City street artist Keith Haring to bring his interlocking men, crosses and dogs to models introduced in 1988. Then, in 2018, to commemorate Mickey Mouse's 90th birthday, Swatch produced two artist watches: a posthumous series in collaboration with the Keith Haring Foundation, and another with Hirst.

Swatch's partnership with museums has opened up a treasure trove of art works by long-deceased artists. The 2021 series with New York City's Museum of Modern Art featured details from *The Starry Night* by Vincent van Gogh and *The Dream* by Henri Rousseau.

Another artist collaboration, this time by Movado, began with Andy Warhol. The Artists Series Times 5 watch, produced in 1988 in an edition of 250, was a steel bracelet linking five watches, each with its own quartz movement and unique dial—a design that evoked the artist's affinity for repeated images.

In recent decades, art has brought more artists and watch brands together. While some are active cultural actors—Cartier has an art foundation and Audemars Piguet an art patronage

CREATE A SCENE
Clockwise from top left: Damien Hirst; Swatch x Damien Hirst Mirror Spot Mickey watch, 2018; Keith Haring decorates the Berlin Wall; Keith Haring Swatch from 1986; artist Felipe Pantone; Salvador Dalí in New York, 1957; Piaget Dalí d'Or watch; Hublot Murakami NFT; Louis Vuitton Tambour Horizon "Kusama" Light Up Connected Watch; Yayoi Kusama; Zenith DEFY Extreme Felipe Pantone.

HIRST: NATHANAEL TURNER/NEW YORK TIMES/REDUX/EYEVINE. DALÍ: POPSIE RANDOLPH/MICHAEL OCHS ARCHIVES/GETTY IMAGES. PANTONE: ZENITH. HARING: RAINER KLOSTERMEIE/AP/SHUTTERSTOCK. KUSAMA: FAIRCHILD ARCHIVE/PENSKE MEDIA VIA GETTY IMAGES. WATCHES: HUBLOT; LOUIS VUITTON; PIAGET; SWATCH; ZENITH.

swatch
LOUIS VUITTON
12
36
ZENITH
swatch

©TM/KK

JACOB&CO
RICHARD MILLE

PICTURE THIS

Clockwise from top left: Movado Andy Warhol Times 5 watch; Andy Warhol; Richard Mille RM 68-01 Tourbillon Cyril Kongo; *The Amida Falls in the Far Reaches of the Kisokaid Road* by Katsushika Hokusai; Jaeger-LeCoultre Reverso Tribute Enamel Hokusai "Amida Falls"; Jacob & Co Astronomia Alec Monopoly.

STREET SMART

From far left: Alec Monopoly at Art Basel Miami Beach; H. Moser & Cie Endeavour Centre Seconds x Seconde/Seconde/ watch.

AMIDA FALLS: HERITAGE IMAGES/GETTY IMAGES. WARHOL: RON GALELLA/WIREIMAGE/GETTY IMAGES. CHARACTERS: ALEC MONOPOLY/ JACOB & CO. MURAKAMI: HUBLOT. WATCHES: ANTIQUORUM; BONHAMS; BULGARI; GREUBEL FORSEY; H. MOSER & CIE; HUBLOT; JACOB & CO; JAEGER-LECOULTRE; PANERAI; SWATCH; RICHARD MILLE.

programme—they have shied away from product collaborations with artists. Others, like Hublot, have executed a "perfect fusion" of contemporary art and watchmaking.

Thanks to its Hublot Loves Art initiative founded in 2012, Hublot has partnered with world-class artists such as Yue Minjun, Takashi Murakami, Carlos Cruz-Diez, Richard Orlinski, Shepard Fairey and Maxime Plescia-Büchi to infuse the Classic Fusion with an artistic vision, and bring more visibility to the brand. Some partnerships, such as that with the tattoo artist Plescia-Büchi, are unconventional but inspired. "You need guts and a vision to produce a watch that connects with the twentysomething generation," says Plescia-Büchi. Others, such as with the Japanese artist Takashi Murakami—which began with two versions of the Classic Fusion, the All Black and the Sapphire Rainbow—have been fruitful and expanded over time.

THIS YEAR, HUBLOT launched a collaboration with the American artist Daniel Arsham. "My own process is often messy and chaotic, but time is so related to my work, which deals with contemporary objects as if they were being viewed in the future, like a fictional archaeology," says Arsham.

Haute horlogerie has embraced contemporary art with equal gusto. In 2014, Greubel Forsey placed a micro-sculpture of a ship, by British artist Willard Wigan, inside the mechanism of the Art Piece 1. The piece could only be seen with a magnifier in the crown. Bulgari has combined its cutting-edge mechanics with the aesthetics of some of the world's most sophisticated artists to create classic models that blur the line between masterpiece and utilitarian object. The 13-piece Octo Finissimo series, for instance, produced in collaboration with the Chinese-ink painter Simon Ma, was offered exclusively to savvy collectors in China.

Paradoxical as it may seem, the chaotic pizzazz of street art has been a natural fit with the disciplined world of watchmaking, as Richard Mille demonstrated in 2016 with the 30-piece RM 68-01 series designed in collaboration with graffiti artist Cyril Kongo, who used miniature tools to micro-paint components of the piece's movement. Zenith's recent run with the Argentinian-born artist Felipe Pantone has also been a successful partnership, producing sold-out editions of the 100-piece Limited DEFY 21 and the DEFY Extreme Felipe Pantone.

The Art Basel fair in Miami Beach was where Corum debuted its Bubble Mona Lisa in collaboration with Elisabetta Fantone, and where TAG Heuer's Connected Modular 45 in collaboration with Alec Monopoly saw the light of day, with Monopoly spray-painting 300 bracelets at the launch. Since then, Monopoly has designed special editions of the Formula 1 and the Carrera Heuer 01. Last year, the artist teamed up with Jacob & Co to design a nine-piece Astronomia that features his cartoonish characters as miniature sculptures on the dial.

While the Covid-19 pandemic caused some markets to tumble, it kickstarted a trend for digital art and NFTs (non-fungible tokens). "Watch NFTs push the limits of creativity by freeing watchmakers from material constraints," said Jacob & Co CEO Benjamin Arabov in 2022, when he sold the world's first watch NFT.

Flirting with conceptual art, a number of brands now propose various forms of artist-designed digital or blockchain-minted art with their physical models. Hublot released a new collection of 13 Murakami-designed NFTs and watches at this year's Watches and Wonders. Panerai teamed up with the Italian artist Skygolpe to pair NFTs with the Radiomir Eilean Experience Edition. Louis Vuitton's Connected Tambour features polka dots by Yayoi Kusama on one of its digital faces. H. Moser & Cie has tapped Romaric André, aka Seconde/Seconde/ to replace a hand on the dial of the Endeavour Centre Seconds Concept with an eraser emoji.

Will artist-designed NFTs become the watch market's new trading currency? "Hublot rewards its collectors providing privileged access to both ownership of and trade in unique artistic pieces," says Hublot CEO Ricardo Guadalupe. "Hublot Loves Art!" ■

TIMELINES

CIRCA 1960
The letters of Pablo Picasso's name mark the hours of a Michael Z. Berger model (*right*).

1967
Salvador Dalí collaborates with Piaget on the Dalí d'Or.

1985
Swatch establishes the Swatch Art Special, and launches its first art series with Kiki Picasso (*below right*).

1986
Swatch and Keith Haring bring street art to Swiss watchmaking.

2012
Louis Vuitton partners with Yayoi Kusama; Hublot creates the Hublot Loves Art initiative; Audemars Piguet establishes Audemars Piguet Contemporary.

2014
Greubel Forsey fits a Willard Wigan micro-sculpture inside the Art Piece I (*right*).

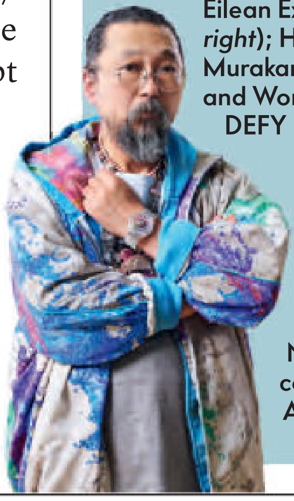
2016
Hublot collaborates with Yue Minjun on the Classic Fusion Monkey (*above left*); Richard Mille partners with Cyril Kongo; Art Basel Miami Beach hosts the launch of Corum's Bubble Mona Lisa and TAG Heuer's Connected Modular 45 co-designed with Alec Monopoly; Bulgari collaborates with Chinese ink painter Simon Ma for the Octo Finissimo (*left*); Hublot partners with tattoo artist Maxime Plescia-Büchi.

2017
Hublot collaborates with sculptor Richard Orlinski on the Aerofusion Chronograph.

2018
Swatch taps Damien Hirst for the Mickey Mouse 90th anniversary series.

2021
Swatch partners with MoMA; Jacob & Co debuts the Astronomia by Alec Monopoly; Hublot collaborates with Takashi Murakami on the All Black and Sapphire Rainbow; Zenith launches the DEFY 21 Felipe Pantone.

2022
Hublot collaborates with Shepard Fairey on the Aerofusion Chronograph; Panerai taps Skygolpe to create NFTs paired with its Radiomir Eilean Experience Edition (*above right*); Hublot drops Takashi Murakami (*left*) NFTs at Watches and Wonders; Zenith presents the DEFY Extreme by Felipe Pantone.



2023
Louis Vuitton features Kusama's polka dots on the face of the Connected Tambour; Hublot launches new Takashi Murakami and NFTs; Hublot announces collaboration with Daniel Arsham.

GREAT MINDS THINK ALIKE

For artists and institutions, finding the resources to keep creating can be a challenge—but watchmakers are rising to the occasion and forging powerful new alliances

BY **MELANIE GERLIS**

MUSEUM PIECES
From left: Louvre, Paris; Patek Philippe Ref. 2499 fetched £6.4m at Sotheby's; Vacheron Constantin Métiers d'Art Tribute to Great Civilisations Grand Sphinx de Tanis; theatre director and Rolex mentor Phyllida Lloyd and her protégée Whitney White; Rolex Day-Date.

ARTISTS HAVE LONG been fascinated by time. Salvador Dalí's bendy watches; composer John Cage's precise four minutes and 33 seconds of silence; and, more recently, Christian Marclay's obsessive, 24-hour, minute-by-minute splicing of time in *The Clock*—all show how marking the hours can be captivating subject-matter.

Now, it seems, watchmakers can't get enough of art. Mobile-phone technology might mean watches are being sidelined in their original function of telling the time, but the horology industry, acutely attuned to its prestige branding, has found an ideal channel to maintain its high-net-worth mystique. Hence an upsurge of partnerships and projects that play on qualities that the two worlds share—enduring beauty, fine craftsmanship and sure symbols of wealth and success.

Many of the biggest watchmakers boast their own museums. Some are dedicated to the history of their brands. Others, notably the esteemed Fondation Cartier in Paris, run artistic programmes separate from their luxury-goods backers. Also in France, where high luxury and creativity are very comfortable bedfellows, Bernard Arnault's LVMH—whose brands include Zenith, Hublot and TAG Heuer—runs a Frank Gehry-designed contemporary art museum.

Other tie-ups between brands and artistic events range from straight up sponsorship—such as Jaeger-LeCoultre's 17-year backing of the Jeu de Paume museum in Paris or Rolex's 11 years with the Salzburg Festival—to major restoration projects, such as Breguet's multi-million-pound support of the complete renovation of the Petit Trianon estate at Versailles and, more recently, of the Musée National de la Marine in Paris, which reopens in October after six years.

Today, artists themselves are increasingly beneficiaries of the watchmakers. For 20 years, Rolex has run an annual mentor and protégé scheme. This pays a salary to the

LOUVRE: OWEN FRANKEN/GETTY IMAGES. PHYLLIDA LLOYD AND WHITNEY WHITE: ROLEX. WINDY BY MERIEM BENNANI: COURTESY OF THE ARTIST, HIGH LINE AND AUDEMARS PIGUET. JEU DE PAUME: NICOLAS KRIEF. WATCHES: AUDEMARS PIGUET; JAEGER-LECOULTRE; ROLEX; SOTHEBY'S; VACHERON CONSTANTIN.

mentors and gives a scholarship to their charges, in fields including visual art as well architecture, dance, film, literature, music and theatre. To mark the anniversary of the scheme, the watchmaker has organised a festival of events and performances in Athens (May 22-28), while also supporting a pre-festival programme to mix the Greek capital's artists with those that Rolex has fostered.

DIRECT COMMISSIONS ARE now a part of the patronage pantheon and are the backbone of tie-ups such as Audemars Piguet's partnership with the Art Basel fairs. The Richard Mille Art Prize, a recent collaboration with the Louvre Abu Dhabi (see p52), is this year worth $60,000 to Gulf-based contemporary artists, while Hublot's prize for young designers enters its ninth year in 2023. Rado also supports young designers, with individual competitions held all around the world under its Star Prize label. "There are many parallels between watchmaking and design, both require creativity, passion, precision, determination and audacity," says Hublot's chief executive, Ricardo Guadalupe. He describes the industry tie-up as "the art of fusion".

Benefits to the artists, institutions and events are clear. The money certainly helps keep culture alive in an increasingly cash-strapped environment. At the same time, the marketing clout of the internationally recognised luxury brands goes a long way towards expanding audiences for projects that have a committed, but sometimes niche, following. For the luxury brands, art has proved an effective way to confer passion and intellectual depth to their products, which can otherwise run the risk of appearing superficial. "Audemars Piguet has always looked to the cultural world for inspiration beyond watchmaking," says Denis Pernet, one of two of the watchmaker's in-house curators tasked to run a programme that has commissioned and shown art since 2012.

Collaborations are particularly powerful when the project and the brand align. So, it is helpful for watchmakers and arts professionals that the boundaries between their two worlds are increasingly blurred.

Many artists enjoy experimenting with new media and are intrigued by ways to extend their practices. At the same time, fine-art auctioneers are busy growing their luxury collectible departments on the back of soaring international demand for handbags and sneakers as well as watches. Their clientele is similarly wealthy and culturally curious while luxury items—often referred to as "gateway drugs" for fine art—help bring in new buyers.

The **BOUNDARIES** between the arts and watchmaking are increasingly **BLURRED.**

HELPING HAND
From left: Audemars Piguet Code 11.59 Starwheel; *Windy* by Meriem Bennani, co-commissioned by Audemars Piguet and High Line Art; Jeu de Paume in Paris; Jaeger-LeCoultre Reverso Tribute Duoface Calendar.
Bottom: Compass Camera by LeCoultre, 1938.

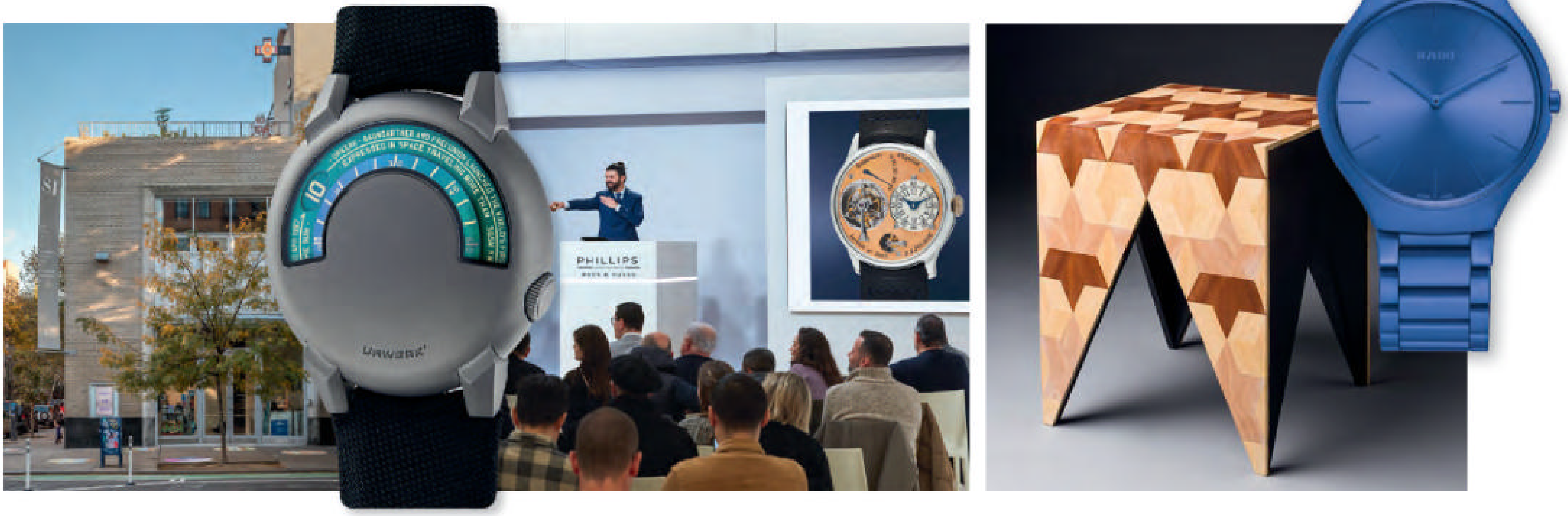
In 2022, Phillips had its most successful year ever, turning over £190 million from the sale of more than 3,000 timepieces. Nearly half (48 per cent) of these buyers were new to the auctioneers, confirms James Marks, the auction house's international watch specialist.

Alongside the evident demand, the amount that people are willing to pay for such luxuries has soared. Last year, Phillips sold 22 watches for more than a million dollars and unique watches made by the most recognised brands can sell for much more. The 2022 league table was topped by a pink-gold Patek Philippe Ref. 2499, signed by the esteemed retailer Gobbi Milano in 1957, which sold at Sotheby's in Hong Kong for the equivalent of £6.4 million.

Museums are keen to capitalise and, as the industries get closer, they stress the similarities between their offerings. One of the most compelling tie-ups today is Jaeger-LeCoultre backing the Jeu de Paume. Quentin Bajac, director of the museum, draws out the parallels between its specialist area of photography and watchmaking. "In both, there is a mix of precision and creativity," he says.

In practical terms, Jaeger-LeCoultre's "privileged partner" status translates to it being the biggest corporate sponsor of the museum, which is only partly funded by the French state. (Bajac says that the support equates to four per cent of the museum's overall budget). Catherine Rénier, chief executive of Jaeger-LeCoultre, also emphasises the similarities between the disciplines. She notes that, back in the 1930s, the manufacturer created a Compass Camera, which now sits in its public gallery as a testament to the horologist's technical prowess and innovation.

Rénier gives weight to the "heritage" of her brand and says that the range of cultural projects it supports—which have also included a sound artist and typeface designer—are about "expressing what we are trying to say through disciplines with similar values, in ways that touch other senses".



SUPPORT NETWORK
From left: Swiss Institute; the Urwerk designed with Cooper Jacoby, sold to benefit Swiss Institute in 2022; auctioning an F.P.Journe at Phillips; Rado Star Prize winner Manuel González Rodríguez's piece *Sestrelo*; Rado True Thinline Les Couleurs Le Corbusier Spectacular Ultramarine.

THE JEU DE Paume's forthcoming exhibition of the 19th-century photographer Julia Margaret Cameron chimes with many of the intangible qualities that Rénier wants to articulate. "First and foremost, Cameron had a pioneering spirit, emblematic of that time—like our contemporaneous founder," she says (Jaeger-LeCoultre was established in 1833.) The fact that Cameron was a woman in a field dominated by men "adds to the beauty of her accomplishments," Rénier says. For Bajac, it is a win-win partnership. "We are very lucky to live during a process that you could call the 'artification' of luxury," he says.

Museums such as Bajac's draw a strict line between their programmes and their sponsors, while their supporters are mindful not to intervene. This extends to direct commissions of living artists. "We would not try to jeopardise their [artistic integrity] by asking them to do something absolutely linked to everything we are, [it is] much more about inspiring them," says François-Henry Bennahmias, the global chief executive of Audemars Piguet. Its 10-year partnership with the Art Basel fairs has commissioned more than 20 artists to show work in 60 locations worldwide, initially at the Art Basel events but since encompassing venues such as the UCCA Center for Contemporary Art in Beijing, the MAXXI National Museum of 21st Century Art in Rome and the High Line in New York.

Linking the selected artists is a focus on new ideas. "Similar to our watches, contemporary art is forward-thinking," says Denis Pernet. In line with the desire to inspire, artists are initially invited to the horological haven of the Vallée de Joux in the Swiss mountains (where Jaeger-LeCoultre, Breguet and some 30 other watchmakers are based). "Through their work, we learn about our place of origin by seeing it through their eyes," Pernet says. The Art Basel group, meanwhile, gets some financial help to run the cost-intensive business of art fairs—plus, says chief executive Noah Horowitz, an association with "exceptional support that is integral to the art-world ecosystem, enabling artists to realise their dreams".

Pernet highlights one recent commission, *Windy*, by the Morocco-born, New York-based artist Meriem Bennani, on the High Line until May 2023. The work—a 9ft-high black foam sculpture that continuously spins like a tornado—has the technical durability and kinetic energy that seems to echo the mechanics of watchmaking. But, Pernet says, its relevance to Audemars Piguet is more its innovation within Bennani's practice—the video artist has never made a public sculpture before. "It challenges what we all thought could be possible," he says.

ARTISTS HAVE ALSO proved inspired to design the watches themselves. In December 2022, New York's Swiss Institute, a non-profit museum for contemporary art, organised the first horological auction to wholly benefit a cultural organisation. The 17 watches donated to the Time for Art sale made a total of £1 million at Phillips in New York, 42 per cent more than estimated—a "transformative" amount for the Swiss Institute, says its director, Stefanie Hessler. The auction will now be a regular, two-yearly event.

Among the biggest sellers in the December sale were unique pieces designed by contemporary artists, including the top lot, Urwerk's titanium UR-102.02, made in collaboration with the Los Angeles artist Cooper Jacoby. He used pigments that responded to body and atmosphere temperatures to create a miniature palette of colours on a combined digital and analogue watch. The collaboration helped boost the signed watch to sell for £336,500, far ahead of its high estimate of £66,750. “Nobody had to create unique pieces for the sale, but artists wanted to,” says Mojdeh Cutter, head of partnerships and events at the Swiss Institute.

For the same auction, the renowned watch enamel artist Anita Porchet painted leaves inspired by Chinese ink art for a Romain Gauthier timepiece which sold for £178,000. The Swiss Institute’s previous director Simon Castets—who had overseen the auction and still sits on the Institute’s board—visited Porchet’s studio before the sale and describes with awe the “painstakingly slow process of making enamel décor for a watch dial.” He was immediately struck, he says, “by the blurred boundary between an artisan and an artist”.

PARIS MATCH
From left: Hublot Design Prize 2022 winner Nifemi Marcus-Bello (centre); Musée National de la Marine in Paris; Breguet Marine Hora Mundi.

SWISS INSTITUTE. AUCTION ROOM: PHILLIPS. MANUEL GONZÁLEZ RODRÍGUEZ: RADO. NIFEMI MARCUS-BELLO: HUBLOT. MUSÉE NATIONAL DE LA MARINE: GILMANSHIN/SHUTTERSTOCK. WATCHES: BREGUET; PHILLIPS; RADO.

OLDER ART, WITH its aura of legacy and longevity, has also proved good inspiration for wristwear. At Vacheron Constantin, one of the world’s oldest watchmakers (which boasts its own director of style and heritage, Christian Selmoni), a collaboration with the Louvre museum has inspired a series of four watches. The distinctive *Winged Victory of Samothrace* and the *Great Sphinx of Tani* are among the antiquities on the backdrops of these limited-edition, métiers d’art timepieces that reportedly each sell for six-figure sums. The alliance is “about being relevant and about keeping on doing what we have been doing since 1755: sharing our knowledge, learning from others, doing better if possible, which is always possible,” Selmoni says.

> “People want STABILITY, and watches are more OBJECTS OF ART than functional objects.”

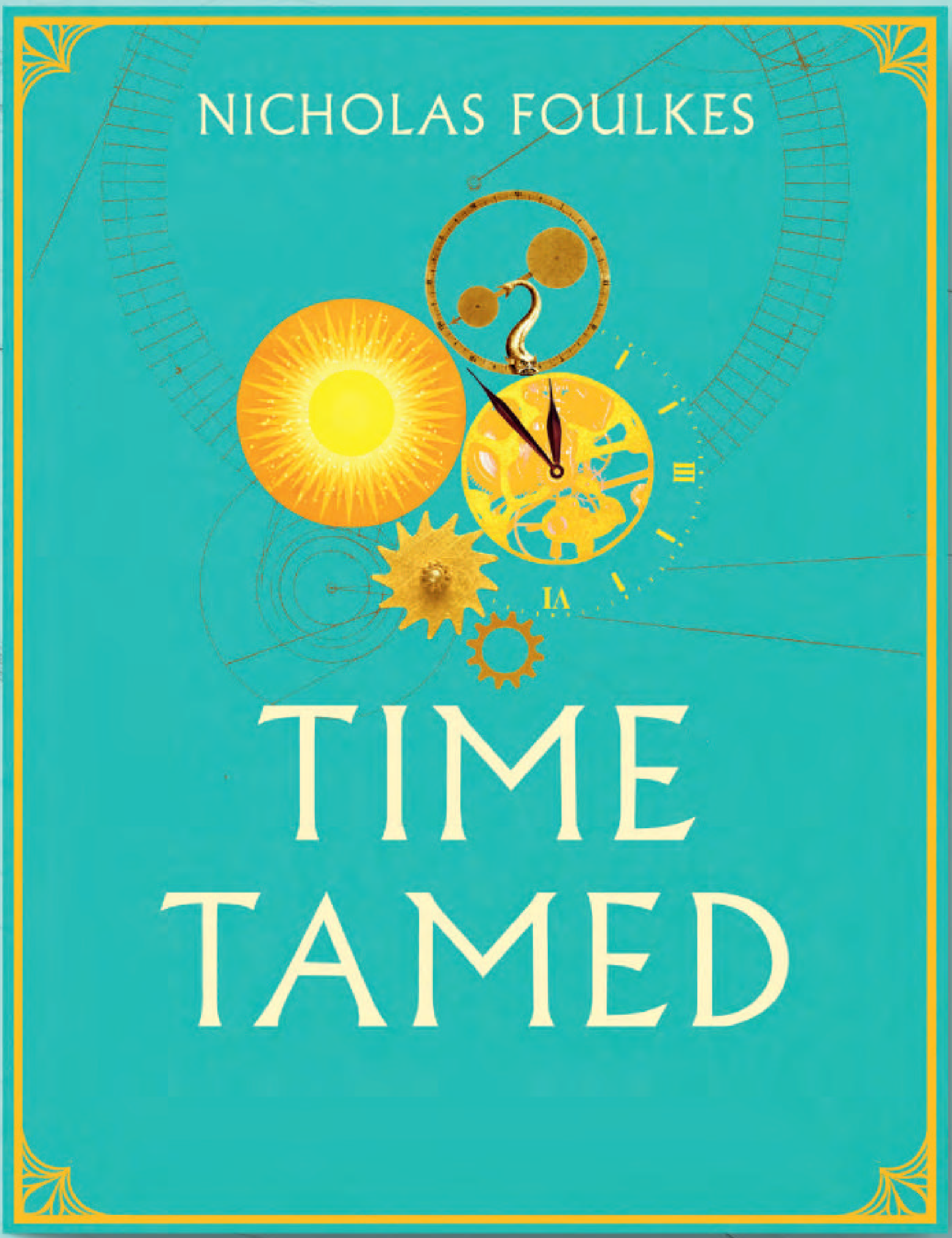
Watch and visual arts partnerships were “jump-started” by the Covid-19 pandemic, notes Simon Castets, who witnessed its negative impact at the Swiss Institute at the time. Arts institutions, many of which had to close during lockdowns and then opened to a much-reduced public, lost money that would otherwise have come from ticket sales as well as from their bookshops and cafés. Their need for a more reliable income stream became greater and from corporations who were themselves not directly hit by the pandemic or facing the increased scrutiny of their ethics that befell traditional sponsors such as oil companies.

At the same time, watches—as well as other luxury items, including fine art—swiftly shook off the shock of their retailers shutting shop. High-net-worth individuals were also largely untouched, in fact billionaires saw their wealth grow by 54 per cent between March 2020 and 2021, according to the Institute for Policy Studies. Unable to buy holidays or enjoy fine dining, the wealthy turned to items they could happily browse for online.

Rémi Guillemin, head of Christie’s watches in Geneva, identifies two types of buyers—the traditional, connoisseur collector base and, more recently, an audience of more fashion-conscious, relative youngsters. The independent makers, such as F.P.Journe, Philippe Dufour and some rising stars such as Krayon, are now increasingly sought out by buyers, Guillemin says. “Media, social media, celebrity endorsements and collaborations with artists have opened up the market,” he says.

For Catherine Rénier of Jaeger-LeCoultre, the pandemic did more than create money for horologists to put towards cultural institutions and artists. “In today’s world, with more uncertainty and surprises, people now want stability and watches are more objects of art than functional objects,” she says. Denis Pernet at Audemars Piguet warms to the theme. “Of course, we now have cellphones that can tell the time, but there is something beautiful and artistic about the continued exploration of handmade mechanics,” he says. Fine art, luxury and the craftsmanship of fine watches represent what Rénier defines as “the opposite of speed, the opposite of obsolescence”. They are, she adds without irony, “timeless”. ■

Discover the remarkable story of humanity's quest to measure time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WATCH REPORT

By **NICHOLAS FOULKES** *Artwork by* **LIZZIE GILL**

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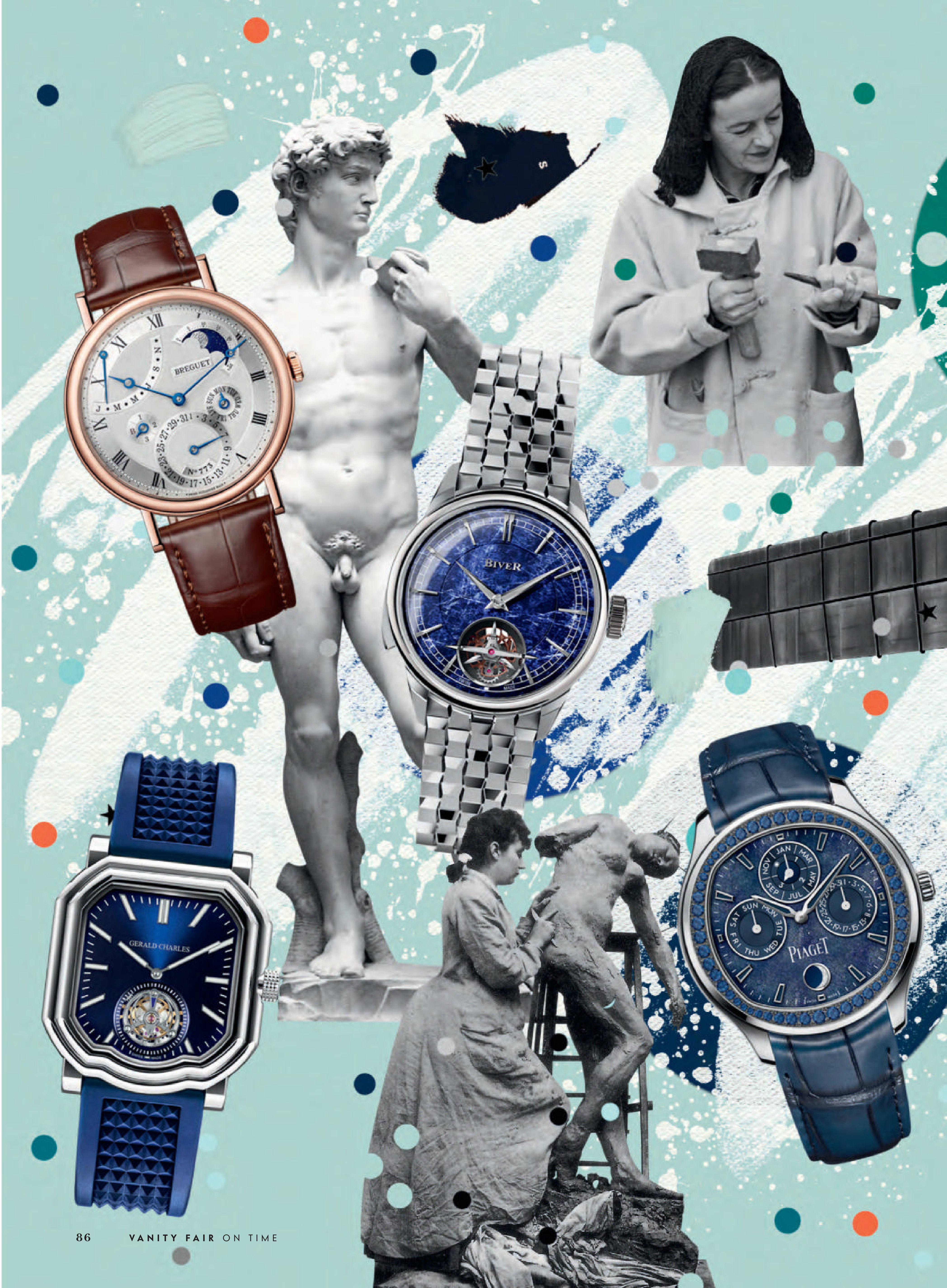
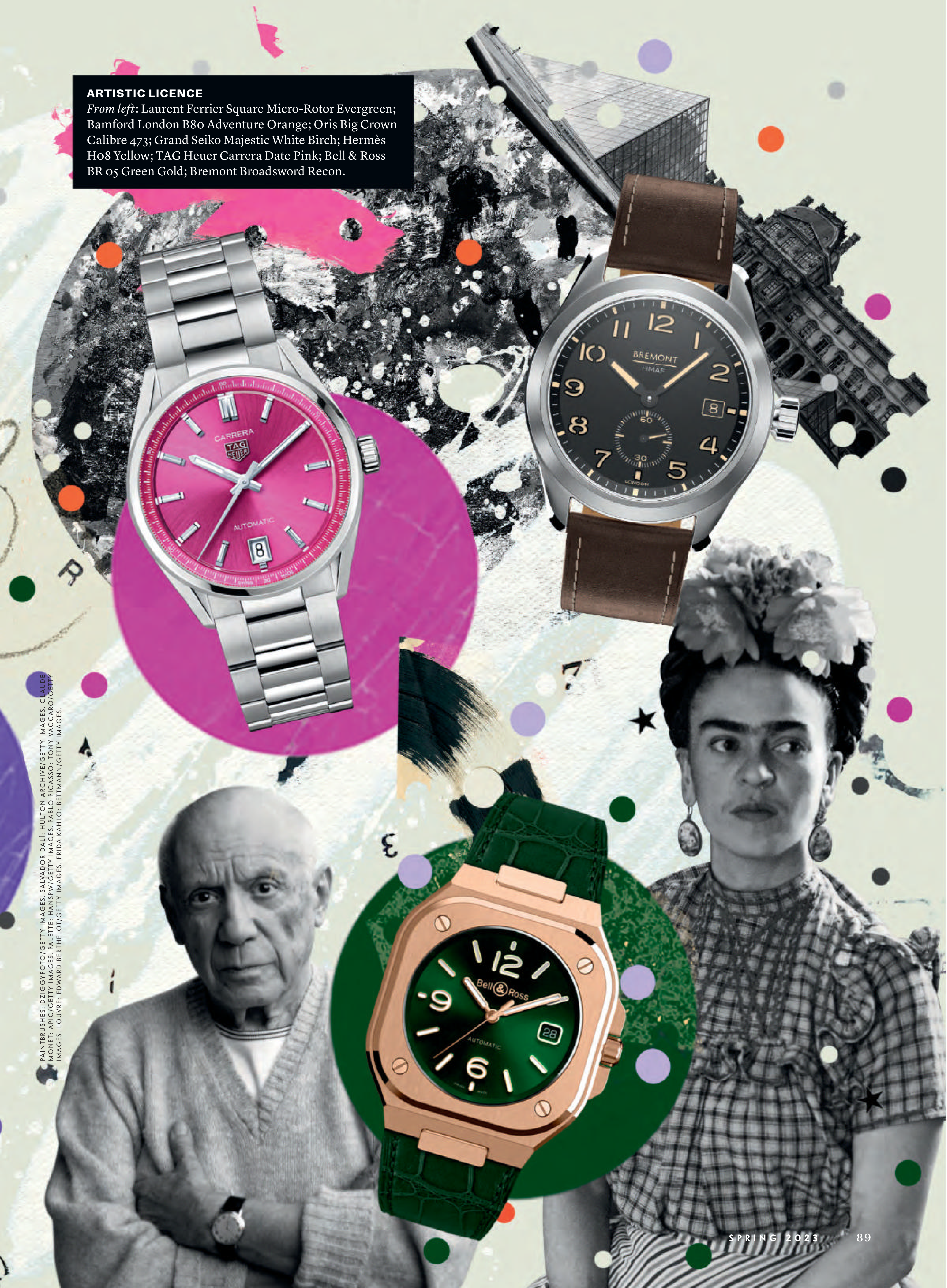

BREGUET
BIVER
GERALD CHARLES
PIAGET
NOV JAN MAR MAY JUL SEP
SAT SUN MON TUE WED THU FRI

SCULPTURE CLUB
From left: Breguet Classique Quantième Perpétuel 7327; Gerald Charles Maestro 9.0 Tourbillon; Biver Carillon Tourbillon; Piaget Polo QP Obsidian; Rolex Oyster Perpetual Day-Date 36 Puzzle Motif Dial; Hublot MP-13 Tourbillon Bi-Axis Retrograde; Vacheron Constantin Traditionnelle Tourbillon Retrograde Date; Ferdinand Berthoud Chronomètre FB 2T.1; Jacob & Co Casino Tourbillon.

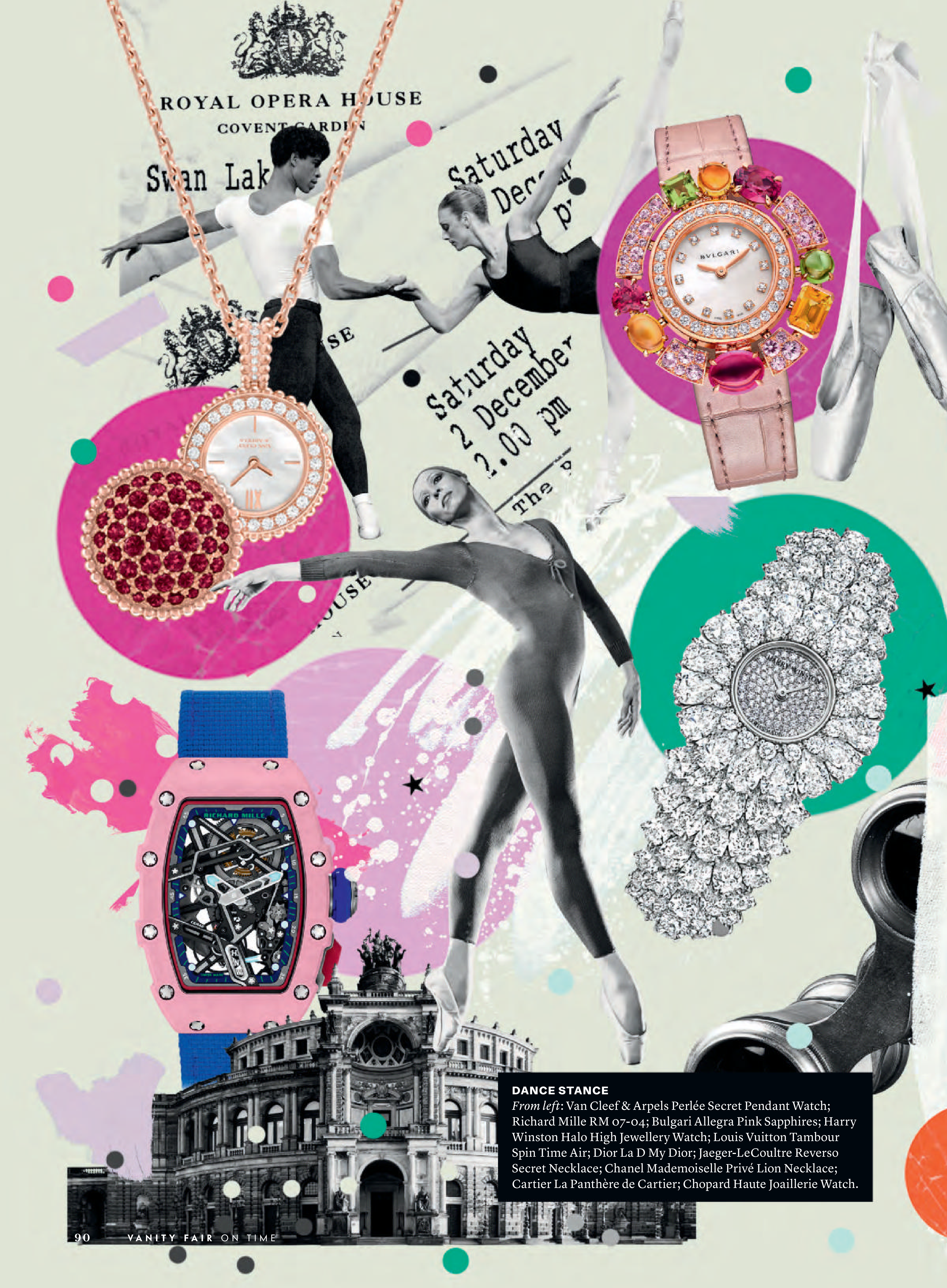
MICHELANGELO'S *DAVID*: FRANCO ORIGLIA/GETTY IMAGES. CAMILLE CLAUDEL: GIBSON GREEN/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO. BARBARA HEPWORTH: HAYWOOD MAGEE/PICTURE POST/HULTON ARCHIVE/GETTY IMAGES. JEFF KOONS: CINDY ORD/GETTY IMAGES. GORMLEY'S *THE ANGEL OF THE NORTH*: IAN G DAGNALL/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO. RODIN'S *THE THINKER*: CHESNOT/GETTY IMAGES. HENRY MOORE: TONY EVANS/GETTY IMAGES.

BAMFORD
AUTOMATIC
SWISS MADE
GS
Grand Seiko
LAURENT FERRIER
GENEVE
HERMÈS
PARIS
ORIS
BIG CROWN
5 DAYS
SWISS MADE



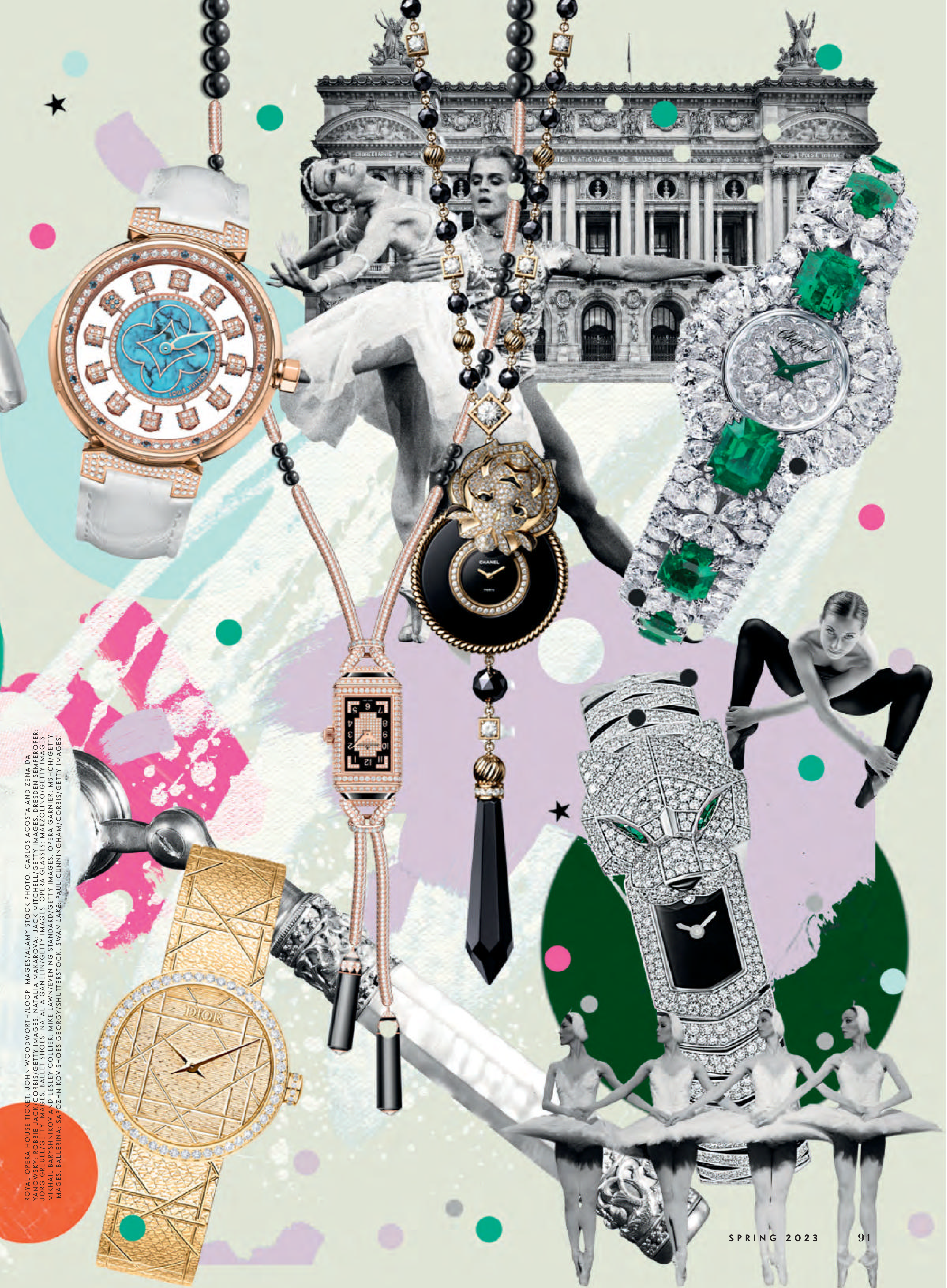
ARTISTIC LICENCE
From left: Laurent Ferrier Square Micro-Rotor Evergreen; Bamford London B80 Adventure Orange; Oris Big Crown Calibre 473; Grand Seiko Majestic White Birch; Hermès H08 Yellow; TAG Heuer Carrera Date Pink; Bell & Ross BR 05 Green Gold; Bremont Broadsword Recon.

PAINTBRUSHES: DZIGGYFOTO/GETTY IMAGES. SALVADOR DALÍ: HULTON ARCHIVE/GETTY IMAGES. CLAUDE MONET: APIC/GETTY IMAGES. PALETTE: HANSPW/GETTY IMAGES. PABLO PICASSO: TONY VACCARO/GETTY IMAGES. LOUVRE: EDWARD BERTHELOT/GETTY IMAGES. FRIDA KAHLO: BETTMANN/GETTY IMAGES.


ROYAL OPERA HOUSE
COVENT GARDEN
Swan Lake
Saturday
2 December
2.00 pm
The
BVLGARI
RICHARD MILLE
HARRY WINSTON

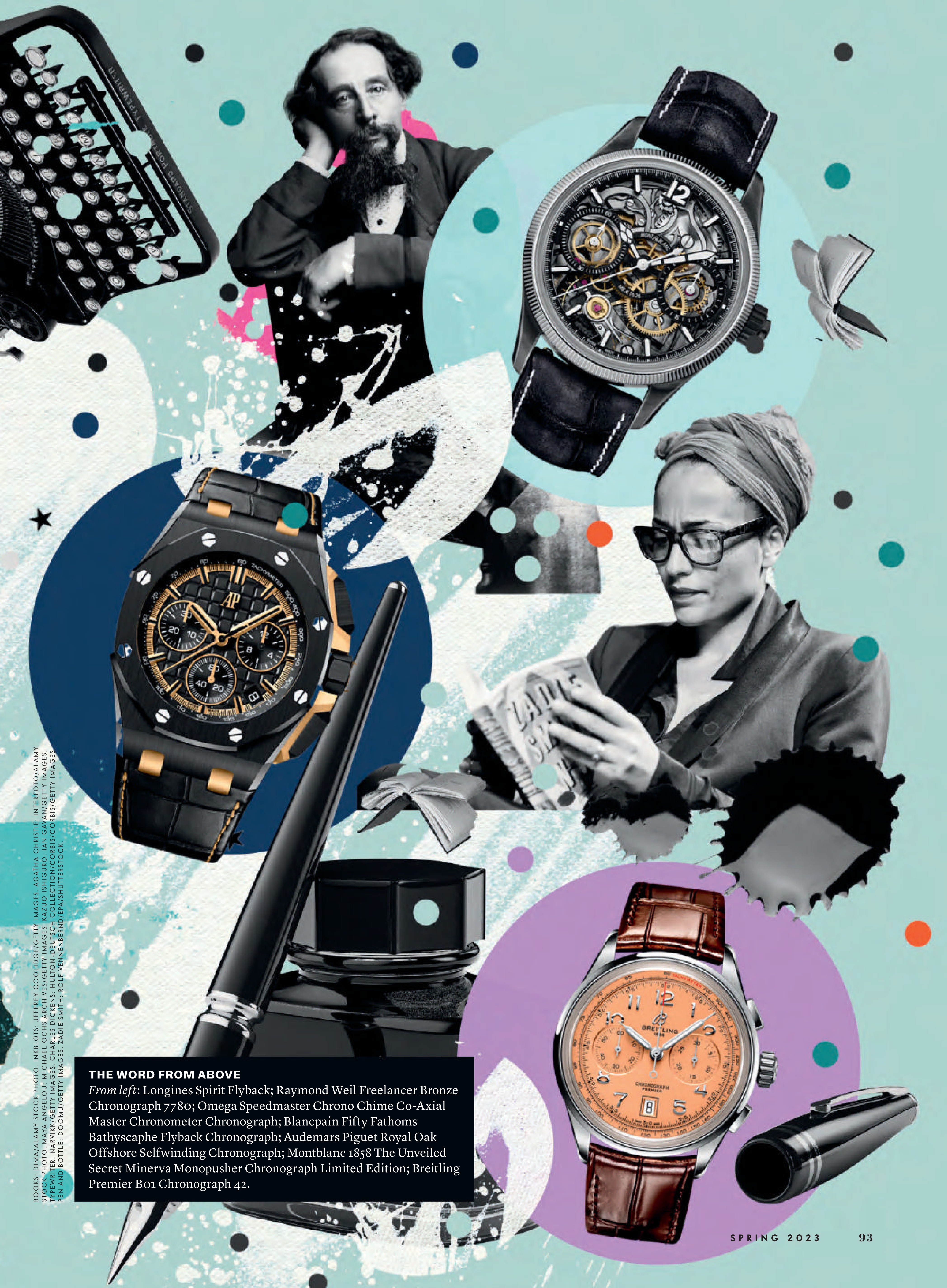
DANCE STANCE

From left: Van Cleef & Arpels Perlée Secret Pendant Watch; Richard Mille RM 07-04; Bulgari Allegra Pink Sapphires; Harry Winston Halo High Jewellery Watch; Louis Vuitton Tambour Spin Time Air; Dior La D My Dior; Jaeger-LeCoultre Reverso Secret Necklace; Chanel Mademoiselle Privé Lion Necklace; Cartier La Panthère de Cartier; Chopard Haute Joaillerie Watch.



ROYAL OPERA HOUSE TICKET: JOHN WOODWORTH/LOOP IMAGES/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO. CARLOS ACOSTA AND ZENAIDA YANOWSKY: ROBBIE JACK/CORBIS/GETTY IMAGES. NATALIA MAKAROVA: JACK MITCHELL/GETTY IMAGES. DRESDEN SEMPEROPER: JORG GREUEL/GETTY IMAGES. BALLET SHOES: NATALIA GANELIN/GETTY IMAGES. OPERA GLASSES: MARZOLINO/GETTY IMAGES. MIKHAIL BARYSHNIKOV AND LESLEY COLLIER: MIKE LAWN/EVENING STANDARD/GETTY IMAGES. OPERA GARNIER: MSHCH/GETTY IMAGES. BALLERINA: SAPOZHNIKOV SHOES GEORGY/SHUTTERSTOCK. *SWAN LAKE*: PAUL CUNNINGHAM/CORBIS/GETTY IMAGES.

RAYMOND WEIL
GENEVE
PULSOMETER
OMEGA
Speedmaster
TACHYMÈTRE
LONGINES
AUTOMATIC
BLANCPAIN
Fifty Fathoms

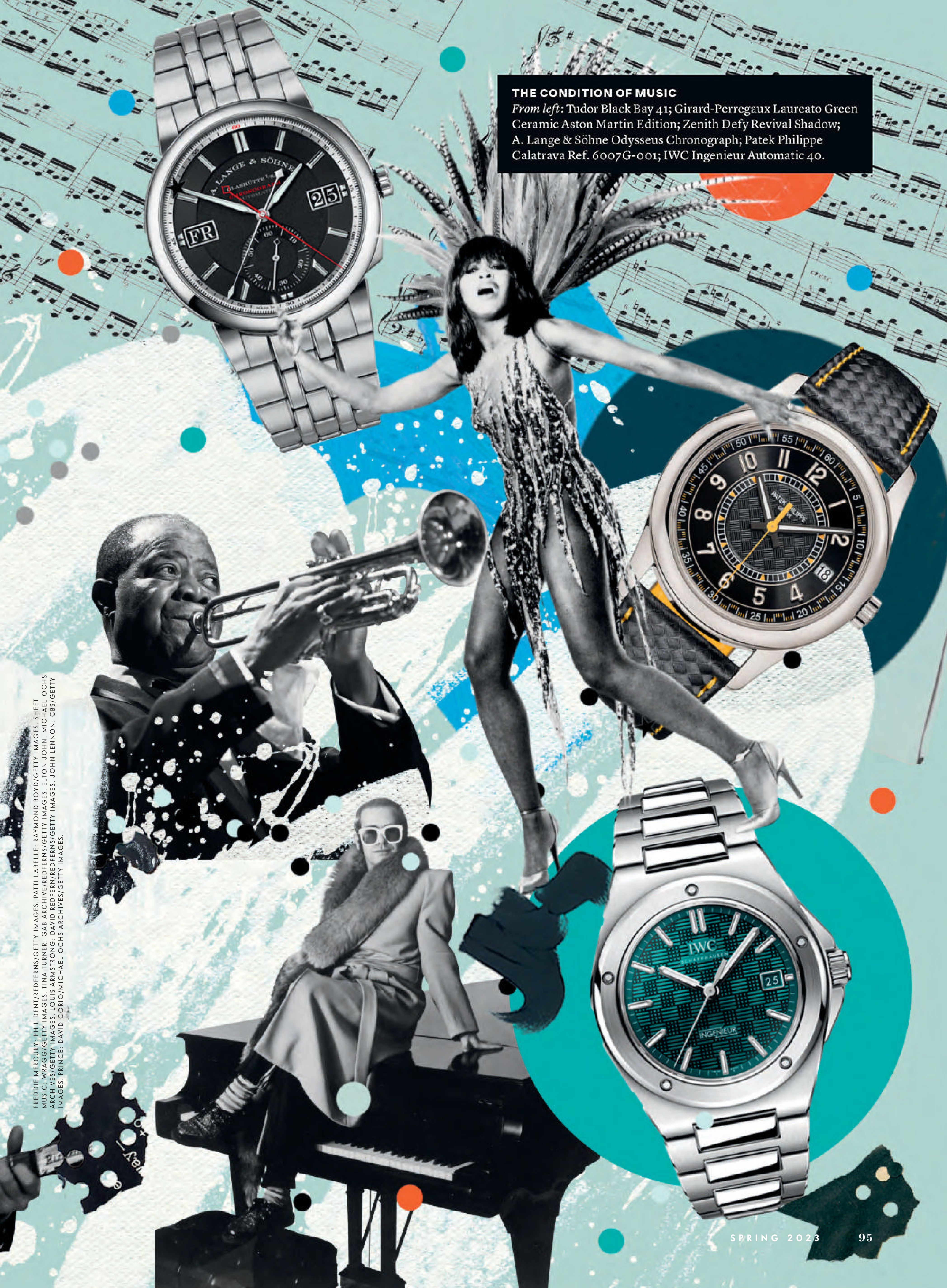


THE WORD FROM ABOVE

From left: Longines Spirit Flyback; Raymond Weil Freelancer Bronze Chronograph 7780; Omega Speedmaster Chrono Chime Co-Axial Master Chronometer Chronograph; Blancpain Fifty Fathoms Bathyscaphe Flyback Chronograph; Audemars Piguet Royal Oak Offshore Selfwinding Chronograph; Montblanc 1858 The Unveiled Secret Minerva Monopusher Chronograph Limited Edition; Breitling Premier B01 Chronograph 42.

BOOKS: DIMA/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO. INKBLOTS: JEFFREY COOLIDGE/GETTY IMAGES. AGATHA CHRISTIE: INTERFOTO/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO. MAYA ANGELOU: MICHAEL OCHS ARCHIVES/GETTY IMAGES. KAZUO ISHIGURO: IAN GAVAN/GETTY IMAGES. TYPEWRITER: NARVIKK/GETTY IMAGES. CHARLES DICKENS: HULTON-DEUTSCH COLLECTION/CORBIS/CORBIS/GETTY IMAGES. PEN AND BOTTLE: DOOMU/GETTY IMAGES. ZADIE SMITH: ROLF VENNENBERND/EPA/SHUTTERSTOCK.

TUDOR
GENEVE
CHRONOMETER
OFFICIALLY CERTIFIED
ZENITH
automatic
DEFY
GP
GIRARD-PERREGAUX
LAUREATO
AUTOMATIC



THE CONDITION OF MUSIC

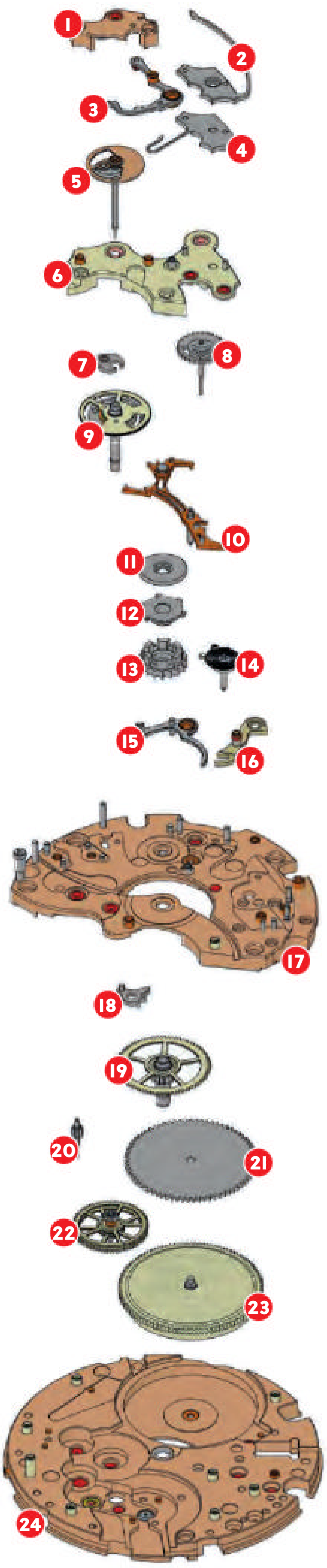
From left: Tudor Black Bay 41; Girard-Perregaux Laureato Green Ceramic Aston Martin Edition; Zenith Defy Revival Shadow; A. Lange & Söhne Odysseus Chronograph; Patek Philippe Calatrava Ref. 6007G-001; IWC Ingenieur Automatic 40.

FREDDIE MERCURY: PHIL DENT/REDFERNS/GETTY IMAGES. PATTI LABELLE: RAYMOND BOYD/GETTY IMAGES. SHEET MUSIC: WRAGG/GETTY IMAGES. TINA TURNER: GAB ARCHIVE/REDFERNS/GETTY IMAGES. ELTON JOHN: MICHAEL OCHS ARCHIVES/GETTY IMAGES. LOUIS ARMSTRONG: DAVID REDFERN/REDFERNS/GETTY IMAGES. JOHN LENNON: CBS/GETTY IMAGES. PRINCE: DAVID CORIO/MICHAEL OCHS ARCHIVES/GETTY IMAGES.

PATEK PHILIPPE

Grand Complications 1/10th Second Monopusher Chronograph Ref. 5470P-001

Last year Patek waited until after Watches & Wonders had closed its doors to launch one of the best watches of the year—the effortlessly impressive platinum-cased 5470P-001 1/10th Second Monopusher Chronograph: one manually wound movement; two separate chronograph mechanisms; two central hands (one red, one white); 5 Hz frequency; 31 patents; 38 jewels; 48 hours power reserve; and 396 parts. It all adds up to a watch as chic as it is technically exigent.
NICHOLAS FOULKES



1. 1/10th second bridge
2. 1/10th second hammer spring
3. 1/10th second brake
4. 1/10th second brake spring
5. 1/10th second wheel
6. Chronograph wheel bridge
7. Seconds heart
8. Minute counter wheel
9. Chronograph wheel
10. Instantaneous minute counter lever
11. Column wheel cap
12. Shock absorber cap
13. Column wheel
14. Finger spring of instantaneous minute counter lever
15. Brake
16. Reset jumper
17. Barrel bridge
18. Pawl
19. Centre wheel
20. Seconds wheel pinion
21. Ratchet
22. Second third wheel
23. Barrel
24. Base plate

Inside Story

Number of jewels: **38**
Water resistant to: **30m (3 bar)**
Case dimension: **41mm**

PATEK PHILIPPE

Power reserve: **48 hours**
Movement frequency: **36,000 semi-oscillations per hour (5 Hz)**
Movement components: **396**

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GENEVE

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PATEK PHILIPPE
GENEVE

ANNUAL CALENDAR REF. 4947/1A

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